

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LITERARY PUBLIC SPHERE
THROUGH ESSAYISTIC WRITING (1770-1830)

By

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Dedicated

To Adrian Milton Riviere
and in Memory of C. Benton Kline

who instilled in their granddaughter
a love of all things German

and to Marty Riviere
and in Memory of Chris Kline

who never let me forget
their pride in my accomplishments

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The research on women as authors around the turn of the nineteenth century has never been richer. The field has moved beyond the canon wars of the 1980s and 90's, with women authors firmly ensconced in literary histories and introductory surveys. It is rare to find a German department without members whose research addresses women authors, rare to find a recommended reading list that does not make reference to the contributions of women to most literary periods. Although women authors from the twentieth century are arguably more numerous or at least more researched than women in earlier periods, there is consensus that women authors made significant literary contributions at least as far back as the mid point of the eighteenth century. Women authors from 200 or more years ago may have been seen as anomalous, and were subject to public scrutiny in ways that seem foreign to readers today. Still, significant research has been done to reveal the ways in which women participated in the literary public sphere through their novels, plays, poetry, and letters.

In my first chapter, I review the research on women's literary contributions around 1800, in order to establish the means women had to access the literary public sphere. I also provide a synthesis of the discussion on the public sphere leading up to and immediately following the French Revolution, particularly the role and authority available to women. During this historical period, education and reading for women was challenged precisely for the fear that it would weaken the moral fabric of society by encouraging women to seek fulfillment outside their

domestic work. Therefore, it is incredibly important to recognize the contributions of these authors in demanding that the literary public sphere include women and their experiences of domestic life.

In light of the wealth of information about women authors, it is surprising to encounter a genre of literature that seemingly resists their inclusion. And yet, when I enrolled in “History of the Essay” in Göttingen in the summer semester of 2009, the syllabus revealed, to my mind, a shocking lacuna: all of the authors on the syllabus were male. Of course, I knew that in most classrooms, most syllabi and reading lists still consisted of “canonical” authors, and that the American classrooms I knew tended to be more progressive in their inclusion of non-canonical authors than their German counterparts. Nevertheless, I expected at least a token recognition of women in a class designed to cover the entire history of a genre. Surely, a nod at least to authors from the twentieth century: Ricarda Huch? Hannah Arendt? Christa Wolf? The question arose for me: is there any other genre of literature in which it is still conceivable to plan a course that ignores women authors?

I came to realize that the particulars of the seminar I attended were determined by the only comprehensive anthology of essays in the library: Ludwig Rohner’s three-volume collection from 1968. Considering the provenance of that work, published before the ripple effect from social movements of the 1960s and 1970s began to be felt in the literary canon, it is unsurprising that the syllabus read as a “who’s who” of the traditional literary greats. In the case of this seminar, then, women authors’ contributions to the genre fell victim to the lack of scholarly interest in anthologizing the essay. This was the state of affairs in spite of Marlis

Gerhardt's 1997 edited volume, *Essays berühmter Frauen. Von Else Lasker-Schüler bis Christa Wolf* (Essays by Famous Women. From Else-Lasker Schüler to Christa Wolf). As valuable as this resource is, it falls into the Catch-22 of so much work on women as authors: the attempt to recover a tradition of female authorship threatens to isolate that tradition from the narrative of the tradition that already exists. As it turned out, there was another anthology from which to choose in 2009: Marcel Reich Ranicki's *Kanon: Essays* (2006). For all that these five volumes did much to expand upon Rohner's work forty years earlier, only 9 of the 166 authors included are women. In this way, the limitations of the impact *Essays deutscher Frauen* had on the acceptance of women essayists can be seen: men still populate 95% of the canonical essayists.

My surprise at the lack of women authors in that seminar only increased as we worked through the definitions of an essay we would use over the semester. As a literary form, the essay seems to lend itself very much to the expectations of women authors around 1800: a conversational tone, with reflections on a given topic based on one's own experience rather than disciplinary expertise, underscored by a repetition of one's own sense of humility (as in Montaigne's motto "*Que sais-je?*" "What do I know?"), but written for many, unknown readers. These qualities, when found in women's writing, were often used as evidence that women did not have the professional tone necessary to be a truly literary figure, and were destined to remain dilettantish in their attempts.¹ It was surprising to me, then, that in most of the scholarship on the essay, and on the essay around 1800 in particular, there is

¹ Helen Fronius attributes Schiller with referring to women authors as "dilettantes" who would be better off with handiwork than with writing. (Fronius 9).

little research exploring women's contributions to a genre which, according to the rhetoric of the time, women would be eminently well-suited. In my second chapter I review the research on the history and definition of the essay, particularly its role as a public forum for popularizing Enlightenment thought, and how women came to be excluded from the ranks of recognized essayists.

My study began with the assumption that women did indeed participate in this genre. This is particularly important considering the essay's status as a literary form reserved for the reflections of professional authors. Because the essay borders on so many other genres (such as the letter, the sermon, the moral lesson, and so on), texts (or authors) that are not literary enough, according to the scholar reading them, are labeled "just" a letter, a sermon, a book review², that is, a text with a functional purpose, without aesthetic qualities that make it interesting to read beyond its original intention. Given that many women authors positioned their writing within the conventional rhetoric that precluded their participation in literary life as professional authors³, their texts are even more likely to be considered "just" a moral sermon or piece of journalism, and not an essay. As such, these texts today only come to light when there is interest in that "other" form - in the case of these authors, an increased interest in researching the beginnings of women's journalism. Most often, these essays are viewed as journalistic, ephemeral texts that are best read within the context of the journal in which they were first printed.

² See especially Renate Hof, *Genre*.

³ Weigel, *Schielende Blick*

This attitude does not do justice to the fact that many essays that are now considered classics from this time period were also first written for journals, and yet are read as exemplars of the form⁴. Classic essays written by canonical authors are read as literary texts in their own rights, as contributions to public debates in the literary public sphere. With my study, I show that women participated in these debates as well, in the case of these four authors, under their own name, and as already established authors in their own right, who took the chance to also be editors of the publications of their essays: either as editors for journals or in editing editions of their own works. Striking in all of these essays is the fact that for all of the conventional rhetoric these authors use to downplay their authority as public speakers by emphasizing their dedication to being wives or mothers first and authors in their spare time, they abandon their apologetic rhetoric relatively quickly to express their opinion very publicly. I argue that women absolutely did participate in the literary public sphere by writing in the essayistic mode and that they used the essay to express their opinions in public. By taking advantage of the readers' expectation of the form—easy to read, lighthearted, connected to other common experiences such as historical events or literary works, brief but not unreflective—the essay allowed women to take a more public stance than otherwise might be expected. By highlighting one blind spot—that of women's essayistic writing—I want to show the possibility that exists for other gaps to be filled in our

⁴ Just to name a few of the most famous, one would have to mention Kant's "Was ist Aufklärung," published in the *Berlinischer Monatsschrift*, Lessing's contributions to *Die Berlinische privilegierte Zeitung*, Wieland's *Teutscher Merkur*, Goethe and Schiller's essays in their journal *Propyläen*, Friedrich Schlegel's contributions to the journal *Athenäum*.

collective understanding of the historical literary landscape, and its broader implication as a reflection of historical reality.⁵

What has probably been the most consistent of the many challenges of this project is a question of scope. By limiting my analysis to a manageable number of essays and authors, so many voices remain unheard.⁶ There were so many others I could have considered, and all of them contribute to the complex web that constitutes the literary public sphere. Rather than attempt a comprehensive survey of authors through the turbulent time in history, I focus on two pairs of authors, each pair representative of a particular historical moment. Sophie von La Roche's (1730-1807) and Marianne Ehrmann's (1755-1795) essays were published at the peak of Enlightened Absolutism present in the 1780s and early 90s, a historical moment that carried with it great hopes for women's education and participation in European political life. Therese Huber (1764-1829) and Caroline Pichler (1769-1843), on the other hand, wrote in the conservative backlash felt across Europe in the decades around 1815, in response to the violent abolition of the French monarchy and Napoleon's rise to and fall from power. By choosing two pairs, I can compare not just the earlier historical moment to the later one, but also explore the ways different women responded to similar conditions. Within each contemporaneous pair, there is disparity between each author's means of access to

⁵ Lynne Tatlock mentions similar motivation for her edited volume *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation." German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2010).

⁶ An attempt to list these authors would include Louise Gottsched, Christiana Mariana von Ziegler, Susanne von Bandemer, Elise von der Recke, Emilia von Berlepsch, Charlotte Herzel, Caroline Schlegel-Schelling, Rahel Varnhagen, Dorothea Schlegel, Sophie Mereau, Bettine von Arnim, Helmina von Chezy, Karoline von Woltmann, and many more. See Appendix.

the literary public sphere. Sophie von La Roche and Caroline Pichler enjoyed the benefit of having personal connections to nobility. Both began to write before they had to turn to it as a means of supporting their family. Marianne Ehrmann and Therese Huber, on the other hand, were generally speaking not as well connected, and supported themselves as authors for the majority of their adult lives. These distinctions are not necessarily evident from the essays they wrote; rather they are representative of the many varied paths to professional authorship that women around 1800 followed.

This selection was merely a first step, and the second proved even harder: which essays would be included as representative of the many essays these women penned? Even limiting the choice to essays published in one journal did not consistently provide solutions: each author wrote scores of essays, on various subjects and in various styles. Ultimately, I chose essays that stood out for the way they opened up a window on how these women writers negotiated their public voice while being confronted with the expectation to stay quietly on the margins. Essays that considered topics common to all four authors, such as education, childrearing, and advice on marriage are typical choices for developing a full and rich picture of women's lives at the turn of the nineteenth century. But what is particularly striking to me in this research is not that women wrote about topics in which they were assumed to be experts (such as proper reading material for young women) but that they also branched out to topics widely considered unsuitable, and approached this possibility in a number of ways. Often this is accomplished through a misleading title or the choice of a beginning anecdote that falls well within the

expectations of women writers, although at other times no such literary feints are necessary. What I find illuminating about this is that it is precisely the meandering, unassuming tone of the essay, and its reliance on personal experience, that lends itself to this potentially subversive, controversial writing stance. Essays that exhibited a tendency to straddle the line between acceptance and bending of constraints became the cornerstone of my analysis.

My third chapter examines the essays of Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann. I read essays by La Roche and Ehrmann for the way they use tone to create opportunities for publishing their opinions. Although writing about a decade apart, and coming from very different backgrounds, La Roche and Ehrmann used similar publishing strategies to reach their audiences: they both wrote, edited and published a monthly women's journal. La Roche's *Pomona für Teutschlands Töchter*⁷ (1783-84) included a variety of texts meant to broaden the education of middle-class young women, following the model of the Moral Weekly. Ehrmann's first journal *Amaliens Erholungsstunden, Teutschlands Töchter geweiht*⁸ (1790-92) emulated La Roche's journal not only in its repetition of "teutschlands Töchter" in the title, but in content and audience as well. What is the most different between these two journals, then, is the tone. La Roche employs a socially acceptable conversational tone to freely associate between ideas and experiences to share her opinions with her readers and to serve as a model for a way to form and express one's own opinion without challenging convention. Ehrmann introduces satire as an

⁷ *Pomona for Germany's Daughters*

⁸ *Amalie's Leisure Hours, dedicated to Germany's Daughters*

educational tool, and chooses to ridicule behavior she wants her readers to avoid, rather than model in her tone what she hopes her readers will achieve. Satire was an unusual choice for a woman author at this time, and Ehrmann stays within what was expected of German satire in the 1790s, similar to other authors, rather than experimenting with what satirical essays could contain. The choice of these authors to embrace different elements of already powerful literary conventions within their essays is evidence for their sophisticated understanding of and participation in the literary public sphere.

My fourth chapter turns to authors writing after 1800: Therese Huber and Caroline Pichler. The writing and careers of Huber and Pichler give us different insights into the ways that women could establish themselves as participants in the public sphere. There is less difference in tone between their essays. Both women strike a balance between deference to expectations of their domestic duties, while still writing in their free time. Considering the essays of these women authors reveals two perspectives on the place of essayistic writing within the oeuvre of an author's work. Both women wrote many essays for the widely circulated *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*⁹, a journal not expressly aimed at a female reading public, of which Therese Huber was editor from 1816-1823. Huber had a significant role to play in shaping the content of the journal as editor, and as such had an unusual amount of power in the literary public sphere for a woman author. Therese Huber, in her marriage to Georg Forster, would have developed a familiarity with the literary form for which he was best known: the essay. Since it is widely

⁹ *Morning Paper for the Educated Classes*

understood that Therese assisted Forster in his translation projects, it seemed entirely possible that she would know his writing well, and incorporate elements of it into her own literary production. She chose to republish texts from the *Morgenblatt* in bound volumes, but concentrated solely on her fictional texts, primarily short stories. This suggests that she saw her short stories as texts that could be re-read over time, a quality she did not ascribe to her essays.

Caroline Pichler, on the other hand, similarly published essays and fictional texts in the *Morgenblatt* as well as other literary journals. Born into the upper echelons of Viennese society, she was very well educated and connected through her mother's salon to the leading figures of the Viennese Enlightenment. When she collected her published texts for republication, she included her essays. Indeed, over the course of her writing career, she seems to embrace the form of collected essays in her *Gesammelte Schriften*¹⁰ more and more. This indicates two different perspectives on essayistic writing that were in tension with each other even at the time: one that places it more in the ephemeral journalistic realm, and one that sees it as part of an author's more enduring literary work.

All four authors share an interest in writing as part of a late-Enlightenment project of reading as a way of educating a broad, anonymous public. They were particularly concerned with women's lack of access to education, and saw their writing as a way of meeting a particular need. Beyond the factual content of any given essay, these authors were performing, in their position as essayists, the role of

¹⁰ *Collected Writings*

the well-educated woman who has not lost her femininity or sense of duty to family. By reading these essays, we can consider the ways that women around 1800 recognized the division of public/private as a false dichotomy, not necessarily by theorizing publicity, but by putting their experiences into words and publishing them as essays. My conclusion suggests fruitful avenues for future research, and reflects briefly on the connection between canon building and accessibility of texts in our increasingly digital age.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The Public Sphere around 1800

The long eighteenth century in Germany experienced an explosion of print culture. It was marked by a steady increase in the forms of publication, the number of readers, and the rise of reading circles and clubs. While not yet on the scale of developments in the nineteenth century, the Age of Enlightenment, compared to the previous Baroque era, represented a watershed in the evolution of what has become known as the public sphere. The term *Öffentlichkeit* (public) took on new meaning. This chapter argues that women authors were active, if self-conscious, participants in this changing literary public sphere at the end of the eighteenth century.

Many social factors led to the creation of a forum for the shaping of public opinion on matters of taste, education, personal development, and civil matters that served as a new counterweight to the traditional influence of courtly life. In German speaking Europe, this public sphere existed largely as an imagined community of like-minded writers and readers, rather than in a physical location such as parliament or coffee houses. To be sure, best-selling authors and successful publishers were attuned to the social contours of the reading public. Research has demonstrated the socio-economic characteristics of empirical reader profiles from authorial comments to the analysis of the registered users of libraries, subscription lists, and participation in reading circles throughout the German-speaking

territories. Helmut Kiesel and Paul Münch offer a wealth of information on these issues in their still valuable *Gesellschaft und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert* (Society and Literature in the Eighteenth Century). These developments are also the topic of Eleanor F. Shelvin's (ed.), *The History of the Book in the West; 1700-1800*. It contains seminal studies by R. Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?" and John A. McCarthy's "Rewriting the Role of the Writer: On the Eighteenth Century as the Age of the Author." "Reading revolution" but also "Enlightenment through print" were popular catchwords of the day. In Paul J. Korschin's, *The Widening Circle: Essays on the Circulation of Literature in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (1976), Robert Darnton, Bernhard Fabian, and Roy McKean Wiles explore the expanding parameters of literary activity during the long eighteenth century in France, Germany, and England, respectively.

I am particularly interested in how women authors were active contributors to the literary public sphere. I pay special attention to their own qualifications as public authors, both in the content and in the form of writing they produced. Literary genres (*Erlebnislyrik*, novel, bourgeois drama, autobiography) were blossoming into their modern forms, and reading more generally was experiencing unprecedented popularity. Each genre acquired different significance as a contribution to public opinion. The essay was one such genre. The evolution of the essay itself as a genre is the topic of the next chapter.

In order to place essayistic writing within its literary and historical context, I sketch the history of publishing and of literature around 1800, which Robert Darnton has labeled the "communications circuit" (Darnton 11). Authors and

publishers were scrambling to keep up with the increased demand from readers for more new material. This led not only to major changes in the book market and book production, but also left considerable room for authors to express themselves in creative ways.

With an almost *koan* like simplicity, a concise definition of the public sphere reads “Öffentlichkeit ist der Raum, in dem sich öffentliche Meinung formiert” (McCarthy, “Öffentlichkeit,” 292).¹¹ On the other hand, such a pithy formulation calls for closer scrutiny. What does the space of open discussion look like? And what is the dynamic of forming a more widely held opinion? My purpose in the following is to explore these dimensions of *Öffentlichkeit*, which we can render as public sphere. As a concept the public sphere was central to the actual establishment and growth of an open market place of ideas during the European Enlightenment. It has been the subject of a great deal of scholarly investigation.

Despite numerous critiques of it, Jürgen Habermas’s *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962, trans. 1989) remains a fruitful starting point. Habermas traces the historical developments in European society that resulted in a dramatic shift in the understanding of “public” and “private” especially in the eighteenth century. From the high Middle Ages until the mid sixteenth century, “public” was a descriptor that applied to the representation of powerful individuals within the feudal system (Habermas 7). By the mid sixteenth century states began to be conceived of as separate from the person of the monarch, and anything having to do with the

¹¹ The public sphere is the space in which public opinion forms.

organization of that state was considered public. "Private" in reference to an individual gains use at this time, and refers to those without an official position (Habermas 11). With the rise of mercantilism over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the concept of "public" grew to encompass more than just state affairs, and included publicly traded stocks (15), as well as the development of an anonymous reading public (23). The change that Habermas observes is summarized in his definition of the bourgeois public sphere:

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason. (27).¹²

Habermas continues that, particularly in Germany, the space for this "public use of reason" expanded beyond the Parliament, beyond the market square, pub or coffee house to include print media.

Habermas's theory initiated a long and protracted debate. It has been heavily criticized in the intervening decades for having blithely transferred English practices of Parliamentary debate from the House of Commons via newspaper reporting to the coffee houses; an impossibility in the absolutistic German

¹² "Bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit läßt sich vorerst als die Sphäre der zum Publikum versammelten Privatleute begreifen; diese beanspruchen die obrigkeitlich reglementierte Öffentlichkeit alsbald gegen die öffentliche Gewalt selbst, um sich mit dieser über die allgemeinen Regeln des Verkehrs in der grundsätzlich privatisierten, aber öffentlichen relevanten Sphäre des Warenverkehrs und der gesellschaftlichen Arbeit auseinanderzusetzen. Eigentümlich und geschichtlich ohne Vorbild ist der Medium dieser politischen Auseinandersetzung: das öffentliche Raisonement" (*Strukturwandel*, 42).

territories with its plethora of feudal courts. Without a metropolitan center to rival London or Paris, the development of a public sphere in Germany was fragmented, growing at different rates and under different conditions across the political spectrum making up the Holy Roman Empire. The salon, important in the French situation, evolved later in the German or Austrian ones. Particularly worrisome was Habermas's stance as regards the participation of marginalized groups. While there is consensus that Habermas's original rendering underemphasized the effects of social limitations on individual participation in the emerging public sphere, critics disagree on the effect these limitations had on the establishment of a sense of the public at large.

Scholars who contend that the exclusion of marginalized groups was required for the establishment of a public sphere tend to focus on the historical realities of exclusion from places or associations, rather than on a literary public sphere, created for the exchange of ideas through print. E. J. Clery, for example, refutes Habermas's claim that women's presence was not felt in British coffee houses, suggesting it was the presence of a female cashiers in coffee houses that encouraged male guests to maintain a civil tone. Women thus served as a civilizing foil against which men defined themselves. Isabel Hull acknowledges that Habermas has reconsidered the problematic connotations between civil society and economic relations, but still finds that contemporary understandings of civil society were much broader, much more associated with state power, and more forward looking than Habermas's definition of the rise of print media allows (204-205). Hull contends that "the subjection of women in the domestic sphere and their exclusion

from participation in the 'public sphere' were not peripheral or unintended consequences, but consciously pursued goals" in limiting political agency to married men exclusively; that the "intimate sphere" is a creation of, rather than a catalyst for, the restructuring of social life in the eighteenth century, and that this is due to the fact that only men were "producers of Enlightened discourse" (206-205). Hull rejects the term *Bürger/Bürgertum* in favor of "practitioner of civil society," defining practitioners by their membership in public organizations such as moral-literary societies, Freemasons, or reading clubs. Most of these institutions did not accept women as members, and thus women are not regarded by Hull as practitioners of civil society in their own right. Hull notes that women were "ubiquitous as practitioners' friends, lovers, wives, and daughters. [...] Yet, where they consciously reflected upon political rights, the practitioners tended to reason from a particularist and exclusively male standpoint." (212). Joan Landes takes a similar position, emphasizing the way that "the bourgeois public sphere from the outset worked to rule out all interests that would not or could not lay claim to their own universality" (97). In this way, women were ruled out, because as soon as they insisted on their perspective as a woman being represented, they were removing themselves from the universal (male) ideal (Landes 98).

These arguments tend to focus on the social, cultural, and legal limitations placed on women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While such studies expose harsh realities of historical injustice, they overlook the negotiations between actors in what is clearly an imbalanced system. For example, Hull's insistence that women did not participate in the literary public sphere because "they did not

publish” (207) is not born out in light of the wealth of information now available on writing by women. Still, Hull focuses in her detailed and thorough analysis primarily on legal and political institutions to which women did not have access; as a result, they rarely chose legal and political themes as the subject of their published writing. Joan De Jean’s reconsideration of the French *Querelles des Anciens et des Modernes* as a debate generated by women’s literary production and participation in the literary public sphere offers a model for considering women’s centrality to a discourse, even when they are not directly authors of it. Barbara Becker-Cantarino’s *Lange Weg zur Mündigkeit* also provides evidence for women’s interactions and challenges to religious, cultural, and political institutions without being “ruling members” of official institutions.

In her illuminating essay in historical bibliography, Carla Hesse went a step further, comparing empirical publishing records to conclusions drawn by Landes and others after analyzing discourses that attempted to exclude women from participating in the public sphere. By establishing a record of the publishing history of women in France around 1800, Hesse arrives at the eye-opening insight that 536 French women were in print 1754-1800; 330 of them in the years 1789-1800. They produced 646 works on a diverse range of subjects in the final decade of the century. Moreover, the social and economic status of this latter group—two-thirds of whom were not aristocratic—clearly contradicts the culturally perpetrated view that women did not publish writing, at least in France (Hesse, 109-116).

Far more than any political situation, the economic conditions of a given period contributed most to women’s writing. The number of titles published by

women mirrored the openness of the market in any given year. When more books were published, generally, more books by women were published, as well (Hesse 112-113). Her conclusion is worthy of quotation in full:

When we shift our perspective from the history of gender ideology to the study of the literary practices of women during the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, a radically different picture of women in cultural and public life emerges. Indeed, a statistical overview of French women in print explodes three of the most cherished normative myths perpetuated by some feminist historians, based on their readings, not of social-historical sources, but of masculinist philosophers, critics, legislators, and propagandists: (1) the French Revolution marked the advent of unprecedented female participation in public debate; (2) women who wrote were not socially marginalized as outcasts or rebels, they were at the very centre of their social and political worlds, as diverse as those worlds were; (3) there were no typical 'feminine' forms of literary self-expression or 'feminine' perspectives on the political and social world. Women wrote in every genre and from one end to the other of the political spectrum." (Hesse 124)

While caution is advised in transferring Hesse's findings wholesale to the German situation, her use of social-historical sources in judging the level of women's activity as writers, editors, and publishers serve as my guides in the ensuing analyses.

Much research has been done in a similar vein in for the German tradition. Helen Fronius came to a similar conclusion that women's presence in the literary public sphere gains in parallel to the growth of the literary market more generally (136-189). Patricia Herminhouse examines Sophie Pataky's *Lexikon deutschen Frauen der Feder* (Encyclopedia of Women of the Quill)(1898), Marianne Nigg's *Biographien der österreichischen Dichterinnen und Schriftstellerinnen* (Biographies of Austrian Female Poets and Authors)(1893), Heinrich Gross's *Deutschlands Dichterinnen und Schriftstellerinnen in Wort und Bild* (Germany's Female Poets and

Authors in Word and Image) (1885), and Ernst Brausewetter's *Meisternovellen deutscher Frauen* (Master Novellas of German Women)(1897-98) (Herminghouse 78-79). Although considering a longer and later time period, Herminghouse's summary of findings from bibliographies of women authors from the nineteenth century argues that "women comprised from one-fourth to one-third of the total number of literary authors in this period: a far cry from the miniscule proportion of them who have survived in more contemporary reference works" (79). Similarly, Elisabeth Friedrich's *Die Deutschsprachigen Schriftstellerinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (German-speaking Female Authors of the 18th and 19th Centuries) (1981) compiles the names and works of over 4000 authors from more than 400 sources, with the goal "to focus scholarly attention once again on the many women writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century who have been unjustly forgotten and to thereby make a contribution to the history of women's independence" (vii). Susanne Kord's investigation of pseudonyms concludes that at least 3940 women authors published in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, not counting those who published anonymously (Kord *Sich einen Namen machen* 13).

Consequently, like De Jean's affirmation of women writers, Hesse's bibliographical autopsy is representative of those scholars like Herminghouse, Friedrich, and Kord who investigate the ways that women could and did participate in the public sphere, despite their relative marginalization. Nancy Fraser reevaluated the usefulness of the model of a bourgeois public sphere for the late twentieth century based on the research of scholars like Landes and Mary Ryan, whose investigation of nineteenth century American women suggests one

alternative conception of the public sphere: a “counter-civil society” made up of (equally elite) women’s voluntary associations (61). Fraser emphasizes the importance of considering a multiplicity of public spheres, rather than investigating one (bourgeois) public sphere because “it is not possible to insulate special discursive arenas from the effects of social inequality” (66). To include the stratification of power in this scenario of multiple publics, Fraser coins the term “subaltern counterpublics” to refer to “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups indent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (67).

The eighteenth century did not produce organized “counterpublics,” but the diversity of participants in the literary public sphere certainly served to “expand the discursive space” (67). Fraser paraphrases Habermas when she justifies the designation of multiple publics rather than enclaves: “however limited a public may be in its empirical manifestation at any given time, its members understand themselves as a part of a potentially wider public, that indeterminate, empirically counterfactual body we call ‘the public-at-large’” (67-68). The essay is a genre that is marked by an attitude of mind and the particular relationship it invokes between author and reading public. As such, women’s essays reveal the details of how marginalized authors despite institutionalized limitations reached out to fellow members of a broad and numerous reading public.

Fraser’s notion of a multiplicity of publics is for my purposes a useful way of bringing together the concerns of feminist responses to Habermas and the historical

reality of women's writing considered here. A response to Hull's view that women were not producers of public-opinion-shaping discourse might be to apply the post-colonial method of "writing back" to women's writing in the eighteenth century, as Stephanie Hilger has done in *Women Write Back: Strategies of Response and the Dynamics of European Literary Culture*. Hilger's choice of Helen Maria Williams, Ellis Cornelia Knight, Karoline von Günderrode and Julie de Krüdener is instructive because of their ambivalent position between the public and private spheres. She concludes: "Highlighting the ambivalence of eighteenth-century women's authorial self-positioning allows for an understanding of their responses to male authors outside the interpretive framework of women's writing as merely imitative of men's" (Hilger 32-33). By taking writing by these authors seriously as responses to the political upheaval of the day by stretching the limits of socially sanctioned gender roles, scholars can examine the power dynamics between different public spheres as they coexisted and vied with one another.

Complicating this interpretation is, as Ruth-Ellen Joeres has argued, the centrality of ambivalence in women's portrayals of their own authorship in nineteenth century Germany. Although Joeres addresses the situation of women authors primarily after the 1848 revolution, much of her perspective on the ambiguity of representation applies to earlier women authors as well. The increased number of women authors was mirrored by an intensification of published rhetoric that insisted either that women were unfit to be authors (dilettantes), that their writing should be limited to the private realm of personal correspondence or memoirs for their own family's benefit, or that being an author must make them

unfit for their domestic roles as wives, mothers, or daughters. This rhetoric is repeated in writing by women authors, who at times agree that their attempts to write are unsatisfactory when held against an ideal standard, or who defended their writing by insisting they completed their household chores before picking up a pen. For all that women transgressed the “real” divisions of public and private by publishing their writing, they did not challenge the ideology of separate spheres as such.

What needs to be stressed is that the boundaries between spheres were permeable in both ideological and “real” ways. At the same time, moving a text into the public sphere by publishing it or by sharing it with others may involve crossing some perceived barrier, but it may not bring about change. And ideologies in particular tend to stick, to occupy us in such normative and powerful ways that the act of transgressing boundaries is weakened, made less effective. Writing implies the possibility of moving beyond; it may, however, be an almost mechanical step rather than an intellectual or a philosophical transformation. (268)

In other words, because being a named, published author transgressed multiple social conventions of femininity in the eighteenth century, women authors often felt compelled to uphold those social conventions in the texts they penned. This is evident in the deference of the four authors in this study to their roles as wives or mothers. If anything, the fact that these writers were such early pioneers of women’s writing lends weight to the view that they were establishing a new model for emulation. We might see it as a version of Kant’s ideal public sketched out in his “Was ist Aufklärung?” when he pleads for freedom of thought. Paraphrasing Frederick II, Kant wrote: “Räsioniert, so viel ihr wollt, aber gehorcht!”¹³ In Kant’s

¹³ “Argue among yourselves as much as you want, but obey!”

new model the phrase would mean: “publish as much as you like, as long as what you say in print does not detract from the governing authority of the prince.” If we extrapolate this principle to women’s writing which reflects the tensions and contradictions comprised in Joeres’s “ambivalence,” it would sound something like: “Challenge social gender expectations by becoming a published author as much as you like, as long as the content of that writing reinforces the ideology that suggests you should not be published.” A closer look at the ways authors considered in this study negotiated their position between the multiple public spheres can further illustrate the ambiguities noted by Hesse, Hilger, and Joeres.

The contributions of the women considered in this study can be seen as contributions to the public sphere in terms of the non-localized space created by print media. Via their essays they participated in the medium that constitutes the public sphere broadly understood. While the explicit connections to commodity exchange or social labor are stronger in some essays than in others, and the essays are rarely exclusively debates on the “general rules governing” interactions between the individual and the state, these essays can be considered clear indications that women were active as private people coming together “as a public.”

Ruth Dawson has written extensively on gender as a factor that shaped the cultural landscape of the eighteenth century: “A society highly structured by gender relates every significant aspect of itself — daily activities, the personalities of its people, the spaces in its farms and towns, its cultural processes and products, even its tools — to the concepts of masculinity and femininity” (13). She is interested in how women attained cultural legitimacy as authors, without having the benefit of a

lengthier education, while maintaining a respectable level of femininity. The main thesis of this book is that an unprecedented cluster of eighteenth-century German women, caught between their own wishes to become writers and society's confining versions of femininity, validated themselves through the incorporation of feeling into their texts, a choice that had important consequences for their writing and for its later reception, indeed suppression (19).

Dawson is curious about the different "life scripts" of acceptably feminine roles different authors tried to follow. She separates women in her study into "private" and "public" writers. The former invests a great deal of energy writing for a certain period of time, yet refuses to publish, even in spite of offers from editors or publishers, and tended to focus on letters, diaries, and autobiographies. The latter publishes her works commercially, either in non-literary forms like cookbooks or housekeeping guides, or in popular literary forms such as "verse tales, tragedies, love lyrics, novels, essays, travel books, and more" (23). Dawson grants that the distinction between public and private at the time was unclear at best. The spheres cannot be relegated to a private home, a public office, or a coffee shop (although women were hardly present in the last two localized spaces). Ultimately, Dawson sees women writers as accepting that they were exceptions to a norm, a stance that inhibited the writing of other women. Inadvertently, their accepted notion of being exceptions to the rule reinforced the exclusion of women from the emergent category of "professional" writer.

While thought-provoking, Dawson's extended, very visual metaphors can at times prove frustrating. It is worth considering at least a pair of examples, for what

they can tell us about one method of considering the eighteenth century and its limitations. In her introduction, Dawson suggests that literary production in the late eighteenth century was a "palace of literary creation" (28), using extended architectural images to evoke the economic and cultural barriers facing novice authors. In this metaphor, women watched men's behavior in this palace, and tried to emulate it, in order to fit in. Women did not come into the palace together, but rather hear of each other as they wander between the echoing chambers lined with books, and occasionally manage to send each other messages. A "separate apartment" for women's writing is suggested as an "artificial ruin" added much later.

The limitations that women faced are described as constrictions on "what they could learn of the palace's ground plan and of how to open the secret panels in its desks and treasure boxes, and through the constant demand that they adhere to the rigid decorum prescribed for women of their class and religion" (28). These limitations kept them from being able to see the palace as a market place, and while they would help each other on occasion when possible, these women seem to not consider themselves part of a group, and are unable or uninterested in helping other disenfranchised writers, such as Jews, rural workers, or even African slaves (29). The image of a literary palace is an apt reminder of the social status accorded most of the authors that Dawson writes about. A walled palace suggests that there are sanctioned gates through which one entered; gates that are closely guarded.

Overall, this image suggests too strongly that there is one commonly shared understanding of what belongs in the literary marketplace: poetry, drama, novels,

and some "alcoves" dedicated to journalism, travel literature, and so on. Rather than conceiving of one sharply delineated literary public sphere that women could access from different approaches, the focus should be on the changing nature of the literary market place around 1800. The walls of the palace would then be porous. From our historical perspective, the walls might appear as impermeable. In actuality, however, they were more like a hedge or a curtain that, upon closer inspection, could be moved to allow one to pass. The economic forces at play in the rapidly expanding literary market opened up new avenues to a wide range of authors.

The Expansion of the Publishing Industry

The second half of the eighteenth century saw a revolution in terms of reading and book selling culture. Kiesel and Münch, previously cited, provided a rich array of source materials demonstrating the several dimensions of the widening circle of literary communication over the course of the eighteenth century, especially in its last quarter. Siegfried Schmidt organized the information into a systems-theory approach to assess the literary life of the age. These authors reveal how the concept of literature evolved from earlier centuries and ultimately took on an autonomous quality, specifically in the realm of *belles lettres*. Literature no longer functioned solely as a mirror of church and state norms and values, but evolved into a self-organized system with clear professional roles, economic patterns, and aesthetics (Schmidt 280). Kiesel and Münch emphasize that the second

half of the eighteenth century brought about a modern conception of literature, a modern form of the book trade, a contemporary notion of authorship, the modern book dealer, and saw the emergence of a modern reading public (Kiesel and Münch 125). This system established the goal of guiding the moral development of the growing Bürger and urban classes (Schmidt 283).

The reading population grew dramatically over the course of the century, even though according to our best estimates, only about 15% of the population around 1770 and about 25% around 1800 could be considered potential readers (Kiesel and Münch 162). This included individuals from a wide variety of socio-economic levels: certainly the nobility were known to be readers or patrons of the arts, although the range of wealth and privileges accorded various ranks prevents us from imagining nobility as a homogenous group. The "Bürgertum," included teachers, pastors, doctors, lawyers, members of the growing bureaucracy, bankers, and merchants. It has been argued that the defining characteristic of this group is their open-mindedness in regards to lower social classes, a group that defined itself through its desire to help others (McCarthy, "Faktum und Fiktion" 242). Even among "das Volk," including laborers, servants, farmers, sailors and soldiers reading became an increasingly popular activity (McCarthy, "Poet as Journalist" 79). Journals and books were often read aloud. Reading societies were very popular and allowed people to read more books than they could purchase for themselves. As is suggested in Wittmann and Fronius, the reading revolution that took place was less one of widespread reading among a new social class, but rather a change in reading and writing habits of those who were already reading. This change in reading habits

was characterized by a shift from “intensive” reading to “extensive” reading. Rather than repeatedly read a small number of texts, often of a devotional nature, readers began to read a great number of different texts, but read them fewer times (Engelsing). In other words, a change in attitude occurred in the course of the Enlightenment.

This growth in readership is in large part due to the increased access of women to reading (Kiesel and Münch 167-68; Schmidt 336, see also Ungern-Sternberg 1974). Wolfgang Martens, Peter Nasse, and others have offered insights into the kinds of reading material considered appropriate for women (e.g., in the *Frauenzimmerbibliotheken* of the Moral Weeklies). Nonetheless, it is not a simple matter to determine just what, how, and how much women read from the evidence available. Although much progress has been made since Kiesel and Münch noted that historians were still a long way from reconstructing a social history of reading (173), advances in empirical readership studies have been made. While we know much more now about reading habits in the eighteenth century, we still have not arrived at a full understanding. However, it is clear that women were a powerful enough economic factor for books and journals to be marketed at a specifically female audience. Women were interested in following contemporary literary movements, as evidenced by the repeated references to Lessing, Klopstock, Wieland, Herder, Lavater, Goethe, and Schiller in letters and diaries. Reading material was often dictated by male relatives: brothers, fathers and husbands. More limiting than the suggestions of what to read, however, was finding the time to read between the work expected of women in the home (Fronius 106-111). Much ink was spilled at

the time expressing concern for the consequences of women's reading habits, expressing fears that this behavior made women less fit wives, mothers, and homemakers (Fronius 113-122). Reactions to these assertions can be found in chapters 3 and 4, where I examine essays by four women authors.

A rise in the reading public resulted in a rise of the number of books published. In the 1740s, approximately 750 new titles announced annually at the Leipzig fair, the largest book fair in Germany. By the 1780s and 90s the number grew to 5,000 new titles yearly, excluding titles from the Habsburg Monarchy (Wittmann *Geschichte* 122). During this time, German gradually replaced Latin as a language of scientific discourse, and the percentage of the book market made up of scientific titles began to decline. In 1770 theological and religious writing made up one quarter of the books offered, by 1780 that number had dropped to 18%, and by 1800 only 13.5% of new titles were religious in nature (Wittmann *Geschichte* 122). What had previously been the dominant single topic area was replaced by a new one: *Belletristik* or *schöne Literatur*. In 1740, this category had constituted only 6% of the total production of new books, by 1770 that had changed to 16.5%, and in 1800, 21.45% of the new titles at a book fair were literary fiction; the most prevalent literary genre was the novel (Wittmann *Geschichte* 122-23).

This change in genre and subject matter was interwoven with changes in the book market. It is most important to consider the changes that occurred up to about 1800, a period that established the modern contours of the book market until the equally revolutionary change in our digital age. In the 1740's, the German book market was still relying on a model that had served it well over the past two

centuries (Wittmann *Geschichte* 123). In this model, the bookseller was also often the printer, binder, and distributor. These roles were separated out over the course of the century (Schmidt 330-331; Kiesel and Münch 123-32). In the 1760s, a combination of pressure from publishers in Leipzig, and fluctuations and risks in trade due to the Seven Year's War, made prices for books rise dramatically. Smaller booksellers began to struggle to make a profit. (Wittmann *Geschichte* 126). After the death of prominent Leipzig publisher Philipp Erasmus Reich in 1788, booksellers were able to come together and make reforms to the trade system so that risks were more equitably distributed among publishers and sellers (Wittmann *Geschichte* 140). Moving to *Nettohandel* from *Tauschhandel*, that is, paying for books in cash rather than exchanging books at fairs, made book selling much more profitable. This led the way for a bookstore to be a fixture in most cities throughout the year (Schmidt 331).

The market pressures named above led in turn to a growth in sales of unauthorized reprints of books. Rather than buy the very expensive originals from Leipzig, the local publishers would print pirated editions and sell them at a much-reduced price. Although this practice goes against a contemporary understanding of copyright laws, such laws only later emerged as a result of the debates surrounding the issue of intellectual property. The cultural impact of pirated books nevertheless deserves attention. Wittmann comments: "Kaum zu überschätzen ist neben dem ökonomischen der kultur-politische Aspekt: Für die rasche und weitreichende, dabei den Staat finanziell nicht belastende Verbreitung modernen, fortschrittlichen

Denkens und Wissens gab es kein besseres Mittel" (Wittmann 132).¹⁴ Copyright of a written work belonged to the publisher, not the author, well into the eighteenth century. After much prodding by the authors—Lessing and Wieland were pioneers—publishers eventually came to accept the rationale for copyright claims (see Kiesel and Münch 132-54 and McCarthy, "Literatur als Eigentum" 531-43). The first law granting authors rights to their own works is found in the *Allgemeinen Landrecht für die Preußischen Staaten*¹⁵ in 1794 (Schmidt 297).

The changes in the literary market did not just affect publishers, of course, but the way that authors thought about themselves and their writing careers (McCarthy, "Rewriting the Role" 132-157; Kiesel and Münch 77-104). Demand from an ever growing reading public made writing a way to supplement an income, but was still not sufficient for supporting an author or his family. Poor remuneration and little chance at securing a Mäzen (sponsor) led authors in the 1760s and 70s to try and establish their own presses, as the examples of Lessing and Bode's collaboration in Hamburg and Klopstock's use of subscription in proposing the establishment of a *Deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* (*German Republic of the Learned*) in 1773 demonstrate (Schmidt 294). Both of these models used aspects of the subscription system, where readers subscribed in advance to the writing of a particular work. Knowing the number of copies that could be financed helped authors to circumvent the publisher and assured the author a greater take in the

¹⁴ "Besides the economic aspect, the cultural-political aspect is almost impossible to overestimate: for the rapid and far-reaching diffusion of modern, progressive thought and knowledge without financial strain on the state, there was no better means."

¹⁵ *General Statutes for the Prussian States*

profit. Authors could then write with confidence. The subscribers received the number of copies subscribed to for the price of subscription or at least at a reduced rate. A combination of pressure from other publishers (through deliberate reprints of subscription titles) as well as a disconnect between what was proposed and what was actually written (in the case of the *Gelehrtenrepublik*) made these endeavors by authors to improve their condition difficult, although the model of subscription persisted in the literary market for some time (Wittmann 162-168).

The Periodical Press and Essayistic Writing

The period around 1800 marked a great change in the publishing industry — a revolutionary shift that finds a historical parallel in the early days of the printing press, then later in the digital revolution of the twenty-first century. As in any period of great change, a high level of experimentation occurred in what could be printed, and how new reading audiences were engaged. New markets were tested and successful attempts expanded. These technological advances brought about new models of authorship and reader participation. In particular the rapid expansion of the periodical press impacted upon the development of essayistic writing. Not all writing that was printed by a journal was essayistic, nor was essayistic writing only extant in journals. Nonetheless, the journalistic format paved the way for essayistic writing. Short, compelling texts that directly address the reader and encourage her/his sense of participation in the reading experience, hopefully enough for the reader to subscribe to the journal or feel satisfied with having subscribed, became

an important new element of literary production. Two different kinds of journals were particularly fruitful for women authors, their intended audience, and the relationship of the author/editor to the reading public: the Moral Weekly and the literary-cultural journal.

The eighteenth century saw a huge growth in the popularity and circulation of journals, and in the recognition of the power of the periodical press for society: "Das 18. Jahrhundert behauptet in einer Vorgeschichte der Informationsgesellschaft deshalb einen besonderen Platz, weil im Zeichen der Aufklärung erstmals ein allgemeines Bewußtsein von der Macht und der gesellschaftsverändernden Wirkung von Medien entstanden ist" (E. Fischer, Haefs and Mix 9).¹⁶ This experience was not limited to journals for scholarly readers as in the seventeenth century; it was also symptomatic of extensive reading in various social-economic classes. The geographical reach of journals can also be seen in the shifts in place of publication. While in the first part of the eighteenth century, a few German speaking cities (Frankfurt a.M., Leipzig, Halle, Hamburg, Zürich, and later Berlin and Göttingen) dominated the publishing scene, by the end of the century the more established presses and journals in these cities were accompanied by more and more publications in smaller cities across German speaking lands (E. Fischer, Haefs and Mix 16). In order to get a sense of the scale of the journalistic market at this time, however, it is important to consider the average circulation and run of journals. Most successful journals had a run of 500-700 copies and lasted for one to

¹⁶ "The 18th century claims a special place in the prehistory of the information society, because it was under the sign of the Enlightenment that a general awareness of the power and socially formative effect of media first arose."

two years (E. Fischer Haefs and Mix 19), while major ones like the *Deutsches Museum* or *Teutscher Merkur* were long-lived with 1000-3000 subscribers (for statistics see Wilke).

The first examples of runaway success in this category were the Moral Weeklies. Imported and translated from English models early in the eighteenth century, these journals covered topics that varied in content, but consistently promoted the moral value of an educated public increasingly dedicated to reading. The early years of the Moral Weekly, focused specifically in the 1720s and 30s, have received the most attention by literary scholars, particularly in Wolfgang Martens's seminal work, *Botschaft der Tugend*. Marten's work was pioneering in revealing the significance of these periodicals to our understanding of the Enlightenment, in spite of a perceived lack of literary caliber. These periodicals stand out due to the high literary quality of submissions to the journal (Martens 441-460), the importance of the fictionality of the editor (Martens 33-73), and the significance of for building a female reading public (Martens 520-542). If the circulation statistics are considered, however, the high point of the Moral Weekly was actually much later in the eighteenth century, from the 1740s to 1780s (Martens 163). Elke Maar responds to Martens's thorough research by considering specifically the geographical expansion of Moral Weeklies in the Catholic south, particularly in Austria. While Moral Weeklies published around Halle at this time reflect the strong influence of Pietism in this region, the Austrian Enlightenment was more influential for the success of the Moral Weekly in more southern German speaking areas (Maar 22-23).

Moral Weeklies were fundamental to the establishment of a literary public sphere. They deliberately appealed to a broad reading audience, and in so doing were a decisive factor in creating a market for the periodical press. Moral Weeklies reflected upon and directly addressed themselves to prospective readers, but deliberately avoided characterizations based on class or social standing. Rather, the Moral Weekly focused on the personal qualities of their ideal reader (Martens 145). Maar, building off Martens's work, summarized the qualities of this reader: The Moral Weekly has clear expectations of the kind of reader that it is addressing:

1. Die Leserschaft hat genügend Bildung und Muße, um die schriftstellerisch-journalistische Varietät der Moralblätter würdigen zu können.
2. Er bzw. sie befindet sich bereits auf dem Pfade der Tugend oder hat zumindest den besten Willen dazu, diesen Weg zu beschreiten, ist also offen für die moralisierende Inhalte der Wochenschriftsjournalisten.
3. Schließlich sollen die Leser die Grenzen des Zeitvertreibs und damit der Unterhaltung erkennen können, um über das Lesevergnügen nicht in unmoralische Unmäßigkeit zu verfallen. (102-103)¹⁷

In addition to this comes the expectation that readers of the Moral Weekly are trying to fulfill their socially determined roles as well as possible. The Moral Weekly was thus a forum for the reinforcement of a rising bourgeois mentality, a mirror of the times, so to speak. Although the Moral Weeklies opened the private sphere to public

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1. ¹⁷ The readership has sufficient education and leisure time to be able to value the literary-journalistic variety of the moral journals.
 2. He or she is already on the path to virtue, or at least has the best intention to walk this path, and is thus open to the moralizing content of the weekly journalists.
 3. Finally, the reader should be able to recognize the borders of leisure and thus also of entertainment, so as not to be brought through the pleasure of reading into immoral excess.

discussion in a way that had not previously been attempted (Maar 115-116), they reinforced the understanding that women remain in their domestic roles while men are expected to work outside the home.

Women were more directly targeted as readers of Moral Weeklies, in part because they were more dependent on these and other forms of "acceptable" reading for their education than were men (Martens 520-529). The practice of "Leserbriefe" (letters from readers), even though largely written by the editor of the Moral Weekly, offered women readers the opportunity to imagine taking part in a public discussion by contributing a piece to a journal (Martens 57-61). Both Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann included letters from readers in their own women's journals in the 1780s and 90s. Scholarship that suggests this practice was most popular in the 1720s leads to the conclusion that women's journals in the second half of the century were harking back to a much older tradition. By pointing to the popularity of Moral Weeklies well into the second half of the century, Maar and others have shown that later women's journals were not pursuing an anachronistic form, but rather participating in a still popular journalistic tradition.

Women consumers played an important role in the reception of printed books and periodicals. Both forms quickly adapted to the presence of women readers, particularly women who had both the financial means to purchase reading material and the time to spend reading (Stollberg-Rilinger 149). *Die Vernünftigen Tadelrinnen* (1724-25) is considered the first Moral Weekly to specifically address a female audience. In all, over 40 journals were published between 1724 and 1799 that were aimed at women readers. They often had fictional female editors or were

actually edited by women (Mix 45-46). In the second half of the century more titles appeared that were similar to a literary journal, such as Sophie von La Roche's *Pomona* (1783-84), Marianne Ehrmann's *Amaliens Erholungsstunden, Teutschland's Töchter geweiht* (1790-92) and *Die Einsiedlerin aus den Alpen* (1793-94) or even *Flora. Teutschlands Töchter geweiht von Freunden und Freundinnen* (1793-1803), edited by Ludwig and Therese Huber (Mix 47). In addition to journals, a tradition of calendars and almanacs appeared, and quickly divided into multiple sub-groups:

Konzeptionell ließen sich in der Folgezeit fünf unterschiedliche Almanach- und Taschenbuchtypen für Frauen unterscheiden: literarische Taschenbücher, historisch-mythologische Kalender, Modealmanache, kulinarische Taschenbücher sowie die einer praktischen Aufklärung verpflichteten Almanache mit dem charakteristischen Titelzusatz *zum Nutzen und Vergnügen*. (Mix 49)¹⁸

In addition to the example of Moral Weeklies as a model for women's writing are higher brow journals that sought a wide audience with an avocation for literature and culture. These "literary-cultural journals," were a key part of the literary landscape, particularly for the Enlightenment's understanding of itself as a movement attempting to broaden its appeal, where personal self-realization could be achieved best by a public exchange of opinion (McCarthy, "Literarisch-kulturelle Zeitschriften" 176). Literary-cultural journals often included literary texts that were published for the first time, representing a wide variety of genres. They also participated in literary debates, some by focusing on and promoting a particular school of thought such as *Briefe, die neuste Literatur betreffend* edited by Lessing

¹⁸ Conceptually, five different almanac and pocket-book types can be differentiated: literary paperbacks, historical-mythological calendars, fashion almanacs, culinary paperbacks, and lastly the sort of almanac dedicated to practical enlightenment, with the characteristic subtitle *for use and enjoyment*.

and Mendelssohn or *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste* edited by Nicolai and Mendelssohn, others by deliberately not adhering to one school or „program" such as *Deutsches Museum*, *Der teutsche Merkur*, or *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, all of which allowed a literary debate to take place within the pages of a single journal (McCarthy, “Literarisch-kulturelle Zeitschriften” 178). Similar journals had earlier gained popularity in France and England and proved to be sources of inspiration. With their emphasis on communication and interaction with readers, these journals were a key part of the project of Enlightenment: „Die literarisch-kulturellen Zeitschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts legen vom Bedürfnis nach Kommunikation, Kritik und Empathie klar Zeugnis ab" (McCarthy, “Literarisch-kulturelle Zeitschriften” 180).¹⁹

By promoting Enlightenment tenets, these journals created a space for performing acts expression and critical self-reflection in a popular style. They included peer critique that was central to the goal of self-improvement. Above all, their efforts at popular appeal to a broad spectrum of readers proved influential: „Popularität war zugleich ein Denk- und Schreibstil, eine populäre Schrift wollte einem gebildeten Publikum kulturelles und philosophisches Gedankengut zugänglich machen" (McCarthy, “Literarisch-kulturelle Zeitschriften” 189).²⁰ There is a fair amount of overlap with journals of literary criticism and literary-cultural journals, but the former, while informing literary criticism as we have come to know

¹⁹ “The literary-cultural journals of the 18th century give clear witness to the need for communication, critique, and empathy.”

²⁰ “Popular appeal was at once a style of thought and of writing. A popular magazine wished to make cultural and philosophical matters accessible to an educated public.”

it, seemed to see its project more in the evaluation of literature than participation in the development of the individual. Still, the rise of *literaturkritische* journals shows both the acceptance of distanced, anonymous critique of literature as the preferred approach to reading and knowledge, and the interest in shaping public tastes and public opinions (Schneider 192).

Women and Publishing in the Eighteenth Century

Women responded to the opportunity to interact in literary life not just as consumers but also as producers in striking numbers. Focusing on the nineteenth century, Patricia Herminhouse estimates that anywhere from one quarter to one-third of all published writers were women (79). Often the ways women came to publish have been explained through instances of personal biography, usually through a connection with a more established male author (Fronius 137). There were other factors, however, that describe the conditions conducive to entering the literary marketplace both to women who had the support of an already established author and those who did not. The fact that novels grew in popularity (particularly for women readers) made it easier for women to write texts that would find a publisher (Fronius 144). Because these publishers were able to pay their authors better, writing became a cottage industry for many middle-class and aristocratic women. Indeed, it was one of the few ways women could help support their family monetarily without leaving the home (Fronius 147).

Thus new market demands opened up new opportunities for women who had not had previous access (Fronius 150). This was also true, as it turns out, also for the eighteenth century, if not on the same scale as in the nineteenth. Fronius's analysis of women's letters to their publishers reveals a high degree of professional initiative on the part of women authors like Julie von Kamecke, Susanne von Bandemer, Caroline Schlegel, Therese aus dem Winkel, and Elise Sommer. They even broke with the social convention of domesticity in independently and self-assuredly approaching publishers (Fronius 160-180). Considering that Fronius's work was limited by the losses of publishing-house archives in the intervening centuries, it is fair to expect that these women represent a sample of many female authors who pursued literary endeavors in our time frame.

Helen Fronius's contribution marks a clear change in literary scholarship that is central to my project. Rather than dwelling on the ever-present disadvantages of women writers in the so-called "Sattelzeit" (Kosellek), Fronius instead considers both how fractious and multifaceted the gender discourse around 1800 actually was. Rather than interpreting what was written about limiting women's writing and reading as a sign of successful exclusion, *we might instead emphasize the anxiety expressed therein as evidence of gains actually made*. In any event, we need not automatically assume that diatribes against women's participation in literary life are necessarily an accurate historical description of reality: "The plethora of texts which defined appropriate gender roles must therefore be read as a *post hoc* attempt to curb a trend which had already occurred.

This served a double purpose: to preserve the status quo, whilst harnessing women's power as redeemers of men, and of society as a whole" (Fronius 48).

After analyzing the inconsistencies within gender discourse, Fronius looks at the various different ways that women did make space to read and write. She argues convincingly that it was above all else the economic conditions of a booming literary market desperate for new titles that made it possible and advantageous for women to consider becoming authors (Fronius 137). Viewed positively, the "relegation" of women's writing to specific genres such as novels, or topics such as pedagogy, created space for women to see themselves as especially well suited for such writing, better even than men (Fronius 86-87). Since the historical writing scene was always very different than what has been handed down as literary canon, looking at women's writing in light of overall literary production, rather than compared with the writings that have defined this time period for literary scholars, reveals a more equitable playing field. To criticize women for not adhering to the principles of Weimar classicism ignores the fact that many authors looking to earn money for their writing did not follow dominant highbrow aesthetic trends either. In this case, women were more in line with most writers around 1800 than many literary histories have portrayed the situation (Fronius 234-35).

Fronius also provides evidence that women's writing does not toe the line of modesty, long considered the proper attitude for women. While plenty of examples of women writing include a preface to their collected works that emphasize their femininity, such as not neglecting their household or maternal duties while writing, Fronius cites examples by Anna Sagar, whose forwards do not contain any apologies

(88-89). Fronius has done extensive work looking at correspondence of women writers with their publishers, specifically Nicolai's correspondence with Julie von Kamecke (165-167), and Göschen's correspondence with Susanne von Bandemer (167-170) and Caroline Schlegel (170-172). In these exchanges, women are very forward, are explicit about what they want to write, and that they expect to be paid on par with male writers. To be sure, some women did have a male benefactor who introduced them to publishing; nonetheless, others were inspired primarily by the example of other women writers to approach a publisher on their own and attempt to break into print on the merit of their writing. Such an approach proved successful on multiple occasions. Based on her examination of the Göschen and Nicolai archives, Fronius suggests that there is still more evidence in the archives to support her thesis. Had so many publishers' archives not been damaged or lost due to war and fire, the evidence would be available in abundance (159). Fronius challenges other literary scholars to attempt to follow up this work with other forays into the historical publishing reality, and demonstrate (as other have noted too) "that women did indeed publish a great deal and with reasonable success around 1800." She urges her readers to explore and contextualize these publications, rather than to follow misogynistic rhetoric from two hundred years ago that argued against accepting female authors in the market place.

In my own research, I followed Fronius's exhortation to go to the archives and see what evidence of women's publications is available. While Fronius mentions multiple essays in her book, she is not interested in viewing them as a genre unto themselves. Her project has a much broader aim than that. And indeed, she wants to

display the great variety of texts that women actually penned. Altogether Fronius considers a handful of essays: Esther Gad's "Einige Aeufferungen über Hr. Kampe's Behauptungen, die weibliche Gelehrsamkeit betreffend" (1798) and Amalia Holst's "Bemerkungen über die Fehler unserer modernen Erziehung von einer praktischen Erzieherin" (1791), which respond to Campe's *Väterlicher Rath für meine Tochter* (*Fatherly Advice for my Daughter*); Emilia von Berlepsch's "Ueber einige zum Glück der Ehe nothwendige Eigenschaften und Grundgesetze" (On a few Necessary Qualities and Basic Laws for Happiness in Marriage" (1791), and other anonymous texts advocating women's education.

Not all scholars agree with Fronius's take. Nonetheless rather than emphasizing physical or mental barriers, I find it more productive to consider the different possible (and actual) connections among writers, male and female, seeing these connections as a communication web of varying strength and density. Stanford University's "Mapping the Republic of Letters" suggests the kind of connections I mean.²¹ While the Stanford project displays a visual representation of letters between scholars and writers, a similar project could add subscribers to journals and their contributors to this network. A layering all of these strands of communication in published writing as well as private correspondence would produce a tangled web that cannot be unraveled by tugging on one thread, or even one sub-group of threads. While literary historians have followed the more prominent strands of this web to understand how we came to know canonical authors, a look at the tightly woven complexly of the whole communication network

21. <https://republicofletters.stanford.edu>

offers a startlingly different result. I am interested in the less examined parts of the webbing.

A second metaphorical image by Ruth Dawson points in this direction. She uses historical data on the interaction between readers of Sophie von La Roche's *Pomona* to theorize a model of a literary public structured in concentric circles. The difference between overlapping circles and a close up on a section of a larger web are miniscule for the purposes of imagining a feedback loop between readers and one author:

For the *Pomona* group, as a literary group structured initially around a periodical, several roles, arranged in concentric circles, can be identified, with writer/editor/leader in the center and reader/writers gathered around her, with those who lived in Speyer closest in. Noncontributing readers form the outer ring, further divided into primary readers (subscribers) and secondary readers (non-subscribers who borrowed the journal or listened when it was read aloud). The distinctions are based on degrees and directionality of communication, with the writer/editor sending monthly communication to the whole group, in a centralized communication pattern, and every reader at least potentially receiving, although some secondary readers would have had only intermittent access. A portion of readers then responded back to the center, and of these some, whose words or requests were cited in *Pomona*, also came into communication with the whole group. In this way, all readers could feel themselves as potential writers and thus as active contributors to the literary and ideological goals of the group. (139)

While a focus on the readers of a particular journal has proved helpful, I would argue that the interconnected nature of writing and reading around 1800 produced a sense of belonging to a group. With the variety of publishing venues available to women writers both to contribute their own compositions as well as share

reflections on their reading, far fewer restrictions were placed on women's authorship than the first image suggests.

The image of overlapping publics is echoed in a passage from Jean Paul's *Konjektural Biographie* (1799):

In Germany there are three publics or *publica*: (1) the general, almost uneducated and unlearned, of the lending libraries; (2) the learned, consisting of professors, candidates, students, and reviewers, and (3) the educated, which is composed of men of the world and educated women, of artists, and the higher classes educated at least through social intercourse and travel. (There are certainly frequent interactions between these three publics.) (quoted in translation in Fabian 168)²²

What is interesting about this rendition is the fact that the publics are defined by their educational pursuits first, and then by any other social markers such as profession or gender. This scaling reflects the social dynamics of the time, in which education allowed greater social mobility than ever before, underscored by the parenthetical statement that the three publics interacted with one another. Astute authors would of course consider how to appeal to the one, the other or all the different publics. One means of addressing different publics was to participate in different modes of writing.

Modes of Writing

As women became more prolific and more professional in their approach to writing, increasing attention was paid to the appropriateness of their writing styles

²² Jean Paul, *Kleine Nachschule zu ästhetischen Vorschule*, vol 1: *Miserkordias-Vorlesung*. *Werke* Ed. Norbert Miller Vol 5. München: Hanser, 1963, p. 495.

and venues. What genres were suitable for women authors and readers was a matter of much public debate. The decades before and after the turn of the nineteenth century were a time of great experimentation and growth in literary production. A brief sketch of the modes available for taking a public stance as an author will help explain the creative range with even more opportunity for creative intervention. The women considered in the following chapters did not solely write essays. They also practiced other literary genres, which have received more attention from literary scholars. Yet at one time or another in their "careers," women began to appropriate the essayistic mode. What we now recognize as essayistic writing is both a form and mode of writing centrally linked to the objectives of critical thinking in the Enlightenment. Male and female authors alike contributed to the evolution of the essay. To appreciate why and in what ways essayistic writing came to be preferred, I contrast it with other genres. Considering the discourse surrounding appropriate writing for women at this time illuminates how these authors were received by literary critics and historians over time.

Novel

The most significant development over the course of the eighteenth century for literature as it is now studied must be the acceptance and the rise of the novel as a literary form. Although the novel inherits characteristics from the epic tradition that dates back to Herodotus, the eighteenth century saw great experimentation with the novel. The baroque Picaro novel, e.g. Grimmelshausen's *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus teutsch* (1669) and Christian Reuter's *Schelmuffsky* (1696), that focused on the adventures of an outsider to critique society, while still read ,

decreased in popularity. New narrative variations such as the Robinsonade (e.g. Schnabel's *Insel Felsenburg* [1731-43]), the gallant novel (von Loen's *Der redliche Mann am Hofe* [1740]), and sentimental novels (Gellert's *Schwedische Gräfin von G**** [1747/48]) reflected changing tastes in the reading public. Enlightenment thinkers turned to novels to show how the best way to respond was with the right balance of reason and emotion to any given situation (Ward 66). The exemplary behavior of the hero in turn influenced those around them, and presumably, the reader. In terms of content, the most significant change in the novel was the establishment of the *Bildungsroman* — which portrays the growth, not just the change, in a character over time (Kontje 9). The novel evolved into an instrument of moral instruction, rather than a vehicle of entertainment many deemed a distraction and temptation, although this prejudice continued for some time to come, particularly for any novel that did not have a clear moral purpose.

Stylistically, the eighteenth century introduced the epistolary novel, which allowed for the story to be told from the perspective of the characters involved, and for the reader (or a narrator/editor who had "collected" the letters) to reflect upon the moral lessons offered. The first German example of this mode was Christian Fürchtegott Gellert's *Leben der Schwedischen Gräfin von G****. It represents the transition from a baroque focus on courtly life to the Enlightenment model focused on improving the moral character of the individual. The best-known example of the epistolary construction is Goethe's first novel, *Die Leiden des Jungen Werther* (1774). It was revolutionary both in limiting the reader to only Werther's letters and in rejecting the model of a happy end. This stylistic change was a particularly fruitful

development for women writers, since the letter was considered one of the most acceptable forms for women to express themselves in writing (Bovenschen 216). It is noteworthy that all of the women authors featured in this study wrote epistolary novels: Sophie von La Roche produced *Das Fräulein von Sternheim* in 1771, Marianne Ehrmann penned *Amalie: eine Wahre Geschichte in Briefen* in 1788, Therese Huber published *Abentheuer auf einer Reise nach Neu-Holland* serially from 1793-4 and Caroline Pichler authored *Agathocles* in 1808.

Poetry

Poetry also benefitted as a genre through much innovation in the long eighteenth century. Rhythmic schemes expanded from traditional forms such as the alexandrine and iambic pentameter to blank verse, four-beat iambic and trochaic lines, and free verse (Hilliard 110). Poetic themes responded to the growing emphasis on individual subjectivity. Five main themes emerge in poetry. The first included nature poetry as devotional literature, such as Brockes's *Irdisches Vergnügen in GOTT* and Klopstock's religious odes. Second, didactic poetry promoted sound reason and cheerful sociability, as seen in Friedrich von Hagedorn and later in Christoph Martin Wieland. Third, a revival of Anacreontic verse and its celebration of worldly pleasures, was represented by authors of the "Halle circle," Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim, Peter Uz, and Johann Nikolaus Götz. Fourth, the sentimental turn focused on poetry as a product of the heart, not of reason, as in Klopstock's "Züricher See." Finally, authors turned their attention to emulate ballads and verse about "common people", such as Gleim's emulation of a Prussian soldier, or Claudius's persona of the "Wandsbecker Bothe," Bürger's "Leonore" (Hilliard

114-115). Scholars of the period refer to the growth of "*Erlebnisdichtung*," which captures the subjective experience of an individual in verse.

Poetry was considered one of the most appropriate genres for women writers. In earlier centuries women's poetry was often written in a religious context, but by the eighteenth century it was accompanied by secular occasional poetry written to celebrate or commemorate an event (Zantop 39). The ability to write *Gelegenheitsgedichte*, flattering or commemorative poems for special occasions such as birthdays and weddings, was considered a charming social quality in an educated woman. Over time more lyrical forms appear, and more personal subjects are taken up by women authors. Particularly the form of the *Elegie* was associated with women authors and readers (Promies 575). In the wake of *Empfindsamkeit*, poetry began to express intense emotions, although women were expected to keep to simple forms like rhyming couplets, rather than more challenging forms such as odes in the ancient Greek or Latin vein. While some of the earliest women authors to win acclaim, such as Anna Louise Karsch, were recognized for their poetry, generally women's poetry was not placed in the same category as those composed by men. For example, Christiana Mariana von Ziegler (1695-1760) was criticized publically for attempting to usurp male privilege, although she was crowned poet laureate by the University of Wittenberg in 1733 for her *Versuch in gebundener Schreib-Art* (1728-29) and *Moralische und Vermischte Send-Schreiben an einige ihrer vertrauten und guten Freunde gestellt* (1731) (Becker-Cantarino, *Lange Weg* 263-64).

Janet Holmgren's *The Women Writers in Schiller's Horen: Patrons, Petticoats, and the Promotion of Weimar Classicism* (2007). Like most of the authors in Holmgren's study, Elisa von der Recke contributed poetry to Schiller's journal. As stated previously, since the hallmark of essayistic writing is the stance that the author takes in regards to his or her audience, there is no necessary limitation to essayistic writing appearing in verse form. Indeed, most of the contributions by Sophie Mereau (34-66), Friederike Brun (92-107), Amalie von Imhoff: (108-127), and Louise Brachmann (150-191) considered were meant to provoke the reader into further thought, to consider an issue from multiple sides, and reveal a high degree of literariness. Only Caroline von Wolzogen is considered on the merit of her prose in the novel *Agnes von Lilien* (67-91), which nevertheless "incorporates societal criticism directly into the framework of her novel's plotline" (70). Regardless of whether these texts could be definitively established as essayistic contributions, the detailed work of scholars like Holmgren to research female contributors to literary journals of the day is crucial to the further exploration of their other writing, which might match the formal expectations of a prose essay as well.

Drama

In the last third of the eighteenth century, drama was the preferred genre for women authors, second only to poetry (Dawson 24-25). Earlier in the century Louise Gottsched's plays were popular, but considered an exception to the general rule. However, recent scholarship has revealed that women were indeed important contributors to the theater scene through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Susanne Kord's groundbreaking work in *Ein Blick hinter die Kulissen* shows that, unlike what is found in many literary histories, there were in fact a great number of women playwrights in the eighteenth century. Anne Fleig's *Handlungs Spiel Räume* provides evidence that, in terms of success, women's plays were performed at a rate similar to men's plays, about 50%, and due to a demand for theater productions, women playwrights often were quite successful. Marianne Ehrmann was both an actress and a playwright, and included many dialogs in *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. Ruth Dawson has explored her dramatic work as it relates to the *Sturm und Drang* movement (228-235). Therese Huber translated fifteen plays in the late 1790s (Fleig 314-5) and Caroline Pichler wrote three plays and many theater reviews. The recovery of women's participation in the theater, both as playwrights and as actresses, has changed our understanding of women's participation in the public sphere. In light of this research, we have to conclude that women had a larger public presence than the discourse of separate spheres implies.

Letters

One of the most significant contributions of feminist scholarship has been its interest in analyzing and theorizing women's letters. The letter was one of the first widely socially accepted ways for women to formulate their thoughts in writing to share with others (French 50). Like verse, narrative and theater, the epistolary form experienced dramatic change in the course of the eighteenth century. It was encouraged and nurtured by numerous writing guides and models such as Samuel Richardson's European best sellers *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747), both of which Richardson conceived of as guides for writing as well as for virtuous conduct.

Subsequently, the second half of the eighteenth century saw a major change in letter writing style that emphasized the personal, natural quality of letter writing. Although ostensibly a private address from one person to another, letters in the eighteenth century usually had a much wider audience than the first addressee (as marked the reception of Richardson's novels). Letters were read aloud in small circles and reading groups, copied and sent on to acquaintances, to share political news or notes from travels (French 50). Gellert's *Briefe, nebst einer Praktischen Abhandlung von dem guten Geschmacke in Briefen* (1751) was particularly influential guide and praised women as exemplary letter writers. It even included model letters by women. Such guidebooks encouraged letter writers, both male and female, to express personal feelings in tempered fashion, to imagine their letters being read by an anonymous reading public beyond their immediate addressees (B. Hahn, "Weiber verstehen" 16).

The disadvantage of easy access for women to the epistolary mode was the tendency for letter writing to become associated with the idea that letter writing was the only acceptable form of feminine literary activity. Indeed, Barbara Hahn has expanded on Friedrich Kittler's *Aufschreibesystem* of male and female roles as author and reader, respectively, to emphasize that letters between authors and their female readers constitute the space in which these roles are inscribed: "Ihre Briefe inszenieren den Schreib- und Überlieferungsprozeß in nuce, so daß die Heterogenität sichtbar wird, die der Verteilung von Lesen und Schreiben auf die beiden Geschlechter innewohnt" (B. Hahn, "Weiber verstehen" 27). Even when early literary historians studied women's letters, they concentrated exclusively on their

correspondence with famous male authors (Goethe, Schiller, Schlegel). Only recently have scholars focused on the inherent literary value of the letters and published more comprehensive collections of women's correspondence. Here one thinks of Barbara Hahn's edition of Rahel Varnhagen's letters and Magdalene Heuser's edition of Therese Huber's. Such projects make available rich resources for interdisciplinary research into the networking of women's writing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Essayistic writing

The letter and the essay have much in common. Each exhibits a less formal style of writing, uses direct address to reach the intended audience, and each occupies a tenuous place in literary history that much prefers the Aristotelian triadic scheme: epic, lyric, dramatic. To be sure, many essays now considered classics were first written *avant la lettre* as letters or as essayistic interludes in other works. Although scholars like Kord, Hesse, and Fleig have shown that women were accomplished authors in many genres, our curiosity about women as essayists remains to be answered.

A classic example of an essay embedded in a novel is the fifth chapter in the third book of Wieland's *Geschichte des Agathon*, "Der Anti-Platonismus in nuce," but it is also applicable to the novels by La Roche, Sophie Mereau, Fanny Lewald and Eugenie Marlitt considered in Todd Kontje's *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation*. Mary Helen Dupree has noted the essayistic tendencies in Marianne Ehrmann's *Amalie* (108). And the pedagogical aims of La Roche's novels—strongly influenced by Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*—as well as those by Therese Huber,

lent themselves to essayistic excursions. Romantic authors also included essays in their novels, in pursuit of a “universal poetry” (Rohner 569). The essays that will be considered here, however, are not embedded within a fictional text. This filter of fictionality allows the author to recede behind a character, and not claim the written opinion as her own. While the authors considered have written essayistic passages in fictional works, this study will concentrate on those essayistic texts written outside of any fictional frame.

Similarly, many authors experimented with essayistic verse. “Poetische Versuche” continued to be used as a title of collections of poetry through the eighteenth century, for example by Susanne von Bandemer, *Poetische und Prosaische Versuche* (1787), and Sophie Eleonore von Kortzfleisch, *Poetische Versuche eines adelichen Frauenzimmers an ihre Freunde* (1776). Essayistic verse will not be considered here — there is not a tradition of it in German the way there has been in England (Rohner 464), nor did it develop in later periods.

The dialogic nature of the essay lends itself well to actual dialogues, as shown by McCarthy's consideration of Lessing's *Ernst und Falk* dialogues (*Crossing Boundaries* 223-229.) In order to keep this study to a reasonable length and the focus on stand-alone essays, dialogues that are strongly essayistic will have to be excluded. Although tempting to consider, since such writing could be considered very public and even be performed, both the ramifications of fictionality, as addressed with and in the novel, and the difference from what we now recognize as an essay make essayistic dramatic writing better suited for a separate study.

Many letters display the same careful composition as published essays. Certain critical distinctions between letter writing and essay writing justify studying the essay as a separate genre. For example, the exchange of letters between two individuals can continue indefinitely, for as long as both parties are willing and able to write (B. Hahn, "Weiber verstehen" 26). An essay is generally aimed at an anonymous, broad audience. Lessing's "Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend" (1759-65) is an example of early essays in the form of letters (Nickisch 171).

In spite of these other promising veins from which jewels of essayistic writing could be mined, I wish to focus on essays that were consciously published as essays. My purpose in demonstrating how women participated more broadly in the literary market place is adequately served with the more limited focus. Even so, the wealth of resource material prohibits an exhaustive review of every female German essayist. I focus on a representative sampling of what many female essayists of the time were capable of. The next chapter will elaborate on the importance of the essay as a mode of public speech, and its close connection to the establishment of a public sphere. Women's participation in this literary experiment sheds new light on the possibilities for women in society at the start of the nineteenth century.

6. In Summary

When thinking about the public sphere, I sought to demonstrate that it is less productive to imagine a closed system or *globus*. Rather, I argue that the public sphere is better understood as a network of individuals and institutions that interact with one another in print media as well as in physical space such as theater, salon, coffee house, or parliament. By dispensing with physical spaces as the starting

point, less hierarchical patterns such as concentric circles or webbing present themselves as useful visualizations of the dynamic nature of public space in the late eighteenth century. The transformative dynamic to which Habermas refers was in fact even bigger than he imagined.

Although rarely authors of canonical discourse, women were nonetheless active participants in the literary public sphere. They created space for themselves within the many publics that coexisted at the time, even if historians have neglected to highlight them. Previous findings both on the innovation in writing styles and on the presence of women as producers of literary texts provide the foundation for my own exploration of changes in the public sphere. This exploration continues with a closer examination of the importance of essayistic writing to the establishment of a literary public sphere in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER III.

THE GERMAN ESSAY: THEORY, HISTORY, CHALLENGES

The previous chapter gave an account of the rapid expansion of the literary marketplace, which brought with it not just an increase in the quantities of texts written and read, but also an increase in the varieties of texts produced. All modes of writing, lyric, epic, and dramatic, became more focused on the individual, and personal writing gained more literary acclaim and market share. Indeed, John O. Lyons traces the emergence of a modern understanding of the individual to this century in *The Invention of the Self: the Hinge of Consciousness in the Eighteenth Century* (1978). Accordingly, this shift brought about a change in reader expectations. Readers expected written material to connect in some way to their personal lives.

Women were key figures in the growth of the reading market. For example, Moral Weeklies and didactic novels explicitly targeted women as potential readers. The opening up of the literary market to new genres and more authors than ever before made it possible for women to become published authors in record numbers. As mentioned previously, much research has been done on women as authors of novels (Kontje, Becker-Cantarino), as poets (Promies, Zantop) as dramatists (Kord, Fleig) and as letter writers (B. Hahn, Heuser). Considering the fact that the classical triadic scheme still dominated contemporary reflections upon the aesthetic, it is unsurprising that researchers have followed suit. It may strike some as unusual to concentrate on essayistic writing in the eighteenth century, but a review of

scholarship on essayistic writing reveals its centrality to experimental Enlightenment thought. Less attention has been paid to women's contribution to essayistic writing than on women's journalistic writing. Many texts that are now considered classic essays were first published in journals. In part, these texts have escaped recognition as essays because of the challenges presented in isolating particular qualities of essayistic writing.

The Search for a Comprehensive Theory of the Essay

Theoretical essays preceded histories of the essay. In the early part of the twentieth century Max Bense, Theodor Adorno, and Georg Lukács each wrote about the nature of the essay. Georg Lukács's "Über Wesen und Form des Essays. Ein Brief an Leon Popper" (1910) is regarded as one of the first attempts to characterize essayistic writing in its modern form. An introduction to his volume of essays *Die Seele und den Formen*, Lukács describes the differences between scholarly and literary writing, and suggests that there are texts that are literary critiques, yet are a pleasure to read beyond their scientific application — and that this is the hallmark of an essay. It is in the nature of the essay to take a critical stance to life as well as to the topics treated. Lukács avers: "Der Essay ist eine Kunst, eine eigene restlose Gestaltung eines eigenen, vollständigen Lebens" (54). In 1947 Max Bense contributed "Über den Essay und seine Prosa" to the journal *Merkur* and expanded it to be included in *Plakatwelt. Vier Essays* in 1952. Coming from the discipline of mathematics, Bense was interested in comparing essayistic writing with scientific

experimentation when he stated: “Essayistisch schreibt, wer experimentierend verfasst” (59). Bense highlighted the influence of a scientific thought in shaping the essay, and suggests that there is something in human nature that is curious and critical, which finds its best expression in the essay. Theodor Adorno’s “Der Essay als Form,” was published in 1958 in his *Noten zur Literatur*. Adorno considered the essay in the abstract, conceiving it to be a philosophical stance in the space where idealistic thinking was once possible (Schärf 275). Adorno supports this conclusion when he writes: “Der Essay aber will nicht das Ewige im Vergänglichen aufsuchen und abdestillieren, sondern eher das Vergängliche verewigen” (79). Adorno’s theories have been extremely influential in later histories and theories of the essay.

By the second half of the twentieth century, literary encyclopedias and dictionaries began to have entries on the essay, such as Klaus Günther Just’s “Der Essay” in *Deutsche Philologie im Aufriss* (1954). These articles are evidence of the growing acceptance of the essay as a literary form, in addition to a scholarly or intellectual outlet. However, their short nature limited the scope and rigor of the work accomplished. This began to change with Bruno Berger’s monograph, *Der Essay. Form und Geschichte* (1964), and Rohner’s authoritative *Der deutsche Essay. Materialien zur Geschichte und Ästhetik einer literarischen Gattung* (1966). While later authors have contributed more theories of the essay, none has surpassed Rohner’s assemblage of source material and thorough detailing of the history of the essay in German. In 1969 Gerhard Haas published his very readable and concise *Essay* as part of Sammlung Metzler’s *Realienbücher für Germanisten* series, a

handbook to the genre that certainly influenced a generation of scholars and their appreciation of the form.

After Rohner's work there was less desire to rewrite a history of the entire genre, and scholars turned to individual authors or time periods. In the same year as Haas's work, Heinrich Küntzel wrote *Essay und Aufklärung: zum Ursprung einer Originellen deutschen Prosa im 18. Jahrhundert*. This contribution highlighted the experimental nature of prose writing in the eighteenth century and the exciting avenues open to scholars to pursue the study of the essay more closely.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* published a series of articles that focused on the writings of specific authors from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries: Heinrich Heine (Spencer), Rainer Maria Rilke (Stephens), Heinrich Mann (Roberts, "Heinrich Mann and the Essay"), Georg Forster (Dawson, "Georg Forster, Essayist"), Hermann Hesse (Roberts "The Essays of Hermann Hesse"), Goethe (Wohlleben), Ludwig Tieck (Paulin), and Wieland (McCarthy). John A. McCarthy's two-part study of Christoph Martin Wieland's essays shows a trend for theoretical considerations of the essay in its development of a theory of the connection between journalistic and essayistic writing. These essays sparked renewed interest in eighteenth century essay writing.

Setting the tone for more interest in women's essayistic writing, in 1981 Hilde Spiel became the first woman to win the Joahnn-Heinrich-Merck-Preis for literary criticism and essay from the German Academy for Language and Literature (Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung). In her *Dankesrede*, Spiel refers to the roots of the essay, among other sources, in the Enlightenment: "Die Ersten

Essayisten waren Väter der Aufklärung, und zu dieser bekenne ich mich rückhaltlos. Das ist heute nötiger denn je, denn ein Zeitalter des neuen Irrationalismus ist angebrochen, und die Deutschen, logosfeindlich und mythengläubig seit je, sind besonders von ihm bedroht" (70).²³ A sense of the relevancy both of the essay genre and of the dynamic principles of Enlightenment mirrored in its form reverberates in this quotation.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, scholars increasingly turned to more theoretical considerations of the essay. In "Der Essay" in *Prosa Kunst ohne Erzählen*, Klaus Weissenberger distinguishes the essay from other, related forms of non-fictional prose writing. He characterizes the essay as a *Doppelbewegung* between subjective and objective perception, a movement that follows a playful rhythm that helps the reader follow the progression of the author's thoughts. (Weissenberger 123). James Van Der Laan contributed "The German Essay in the Eighteenth Century: Mirror of its Age" to the *Lessing Yearbook* in 1986, and emphasized the essay's sense of liberation and disintegration that inspired experimentation with a new form of writing. John A. McCarthy's award winning monograph *Crossing Boundaries: A Theory and History of Essay Writing in German 1680-1815* was published in 1989. In "Adorno, Goethe, and the Politics of the Essay" (1992) Peter Burgard turned to two essays, written over a century apart, which nevertheless describe and perform a kind of writing that resists totalitarian or tyrannical systems. In this way, Burgard underscores the contemporary relevance of authors

²³ "The first essayists were fathers of the Enlightenment, to which I avow myself wholeheartedly. That is more important today than ever before, because a time of new irrationality has arrived, and the Germans, still believing in mythology rather than logos, are especially threatened by it."

from the eighteenth century. In “Abweichung als Norm? Über Klassiker der Essayistik und Klassik im Essay”(1993) Georg Stanitzek tackled the problem of establishing a standard of a “classic” essay, since the form is one that resists tradition. Paul Michael Lützeler similarly challenged the notion of a classic of the German essay by emphasizing the European context of the German essay in “Novalis oder Napoleon? Zur deutschen Europa-Essayistik” (1996). Thus, by the 1990s, the essay had become a major focus of research.

In 1997, an *Encyclopedia of the Essay* edited by Tracy Chevalier, represents an invaluable resource for the contemporary scholar and a major achievement in a comparative approach to the study of the essay. Over 500 articles describe essayistic traditions from across Europe and around the world, and German essayists are well represented among their ranks, together with almost 40 women authors. In the same year, Monika Kollmann called for the need to reevaluate women’s contributions as essayists and feuilletonists in her article “Essayistinnen und Feuilletonistinnen der Wiener Jahrhundertwende.” The next comprehensive attempt at a history was *Geschichte des Essays. Von Montaigne bis Adorno*, written by Christian Schärf in 1999. In contrast to the strict historical approach that Rohner took, Schärf used a cultural historical approach to the essay, emphasizing the essay’s centrality to the development of modern thought through the centuries (Schärf 18-19). The essay continued to be an object of cultural studies into the new millennium, with scholars turning to essayistic writing that reflects and defines contours of the cultural-historical landscape. For example, Harald Schmidt’s study of Johann Heinrich Merck’s essays as cultural touchstones in *Gedächtnis und*

Zirkulation. Der Diskurs des Kreislaufs im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert (2002). *Text+Kritik* contained articles on Hannah Arendt's essays in 2005. In the same year, Wolfgang Rasch published in the *Internationales Jahrbuch der Bettina-von-Arnim-Gesellschaft* on Luise Büchner's "Gutzkow Essay" and the tensions produced between Büchner's published comments and her private correspondence.

Questions of genre have resurfaced in the last decade, as evidenced by *PMLA's* special topic issue dedicated to "Remapping Genre" in 2007. This interest was echoed in scholarship on the essay as well. In 2005, C. Immo Schneider considered Hesse's *Das Glasperlenspiel* as a hybrid between novel and essay. In 2007 Michael Rohrwasser turned to Kleist's use of scholarly conventions of the lecture (*universitäre Kommunikation*) in "Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden." Renate Hof connected scholarly expectations and women's essayistic writing the next year in her contribution to the volume *Inszenierte Erfahrung*. The scientific essay is the focus of Anne Sophie Meinike's reading of Adorno and Descartes in 2009. These studies combine reconsideration of genre within its socio-historical context, deepening the significance of formal characteristics of texts.

The purpose of this brief attempt at a history of the literature on the essay is to draw attention to specific issues. While never as intensely researched as other genres, the essay never fell completely out of favor as a research object. Because of its rich complexity, it has appealed to scholars over the decades with their changing trends. Two dominant schools of thought emerge on what constitutes an essay. The first is essayistic writing as a communicative stance; the second is essayistic writing

as subjective experience. Let us now turn to a more detailed examination of both of these trends.

Essayistic Writing as a Communicative Stance

Although it is customary to begin any study of essayistic writing with a lament about the challenges the researcher faces in defining its characteristics, intervening scholarship offers a number of very helpful definitions to work with. Most important for this study is John McCarthy's *Crossing Boundaries: A Theory and History of Essay Writing in German 1680-1815*. I find his recommendation to shift the focus in defining the essay away from *form* to *mode of writing* useful. As a form, the essay can appear in many guises. But as a mode of writing it appears on par with the dramatic, epic, and lyric modes of representation. With this suggestion, McCarthy points to Michael Hamburger's notion that "the tell-tale signs of essayistic writing tend to be of a stylistic nature;" and to Rutkowski's reflection on modes of writing and the need for a fourth mode that is characterized by its awareness of its own audience (30-31).

McCarthy points out that attempts to define the essay based on content alone cannot be successful since an essay can be written on every possible subject. The casual, simple style in which essays are written make it hard to define an essay through strictly formal elements. Eschewing these two approaches, McCarthy defines the essay as an attitude (*Haltung*) that the author takes towards her audience. He suggests: "The common denominator is the writer's invitation to the

reader to enter into a collaborative relationship in the method of thinking that lies at the heart of the literary form” (31). This thought is in line with three of the most influential theorists of the essay: Lukács’ „Über Wesen und Form des Essays“, Bense’s „Über den Essay und seine Prosa“ and Adorno’s „Der Essay als Form“ (McCarthy 44-46). All three authors consider a critical attitude to be at the core of the essay, together with the desire to share this mode of critical thinking with the reader.

To illustrate this claim, McCarthy differentiates essayistic writing from other texts with which it shares formal characteristics. First he considers “vehicles of scholarly communication.” The *Abhandlung*, *Traktat*, and *Aphorism* are all rejected as essayistic writing, because of their propensity for being closed, either to a closed audience of other scholars, a closed group of believers, or in the last case, a closed manner of thinking. Two more forms of scholarly communication, the *Aufsatz* and *Brief* were often essayistic pieces in the eighteenth century, but their formal qualities alone do not guarantee essayistic writing (37-39). McCarthy then turns to “vehicles of social communication.” By and large, these forms of writing share a great deal with essayistic writing, unsurprising given their attention to audience. The *Predigt* is rarely essayistic, because of its anticipation of a known audience and goal of leading that audience to a forgone conclusion. A *Dialog* even in its give-and-take, tends to pursue one absolute answer to the question at hand, and in so doing, it misses the subjective nature of essayistic writing. A *Gespräch* avoids this pitfall, but in as far as it is understood to be a chronicle of an actual conversation, does not achieve the literary abstraction of essayistic writing. Similarly, a *Rede* shares a great

deal with essayistic writing, but is meant to be heard, rather than read. Two vehicles of social communication, the *Vorwort* and the *Feuilleton* are practically indistinguishable from essayistic writing, but as with the *Aufsatz* or *Brief* above, the formal qualities do not guarantee the quality of thought found in essayistic writing (39-41).

These distinctions between prose forms culminate in a list of qualities, distilled from previous definitions and research on the essay, as both unique to essayistic writing and constitutive of it:

1. thought association (topos of leisurely walk)
2. dialogic structure and/or tone
3. weighing of the possibilities (*Prozessualität*)
4. the open form (encourages productive interaction, stimulates thought)
5. a dialectical view of reality (polyperspectivity)
6. a tentativeness of approach (subjectivity, point of view)
7. experimental character, play on variation
8. freedom from dogmatic systems of thought or belief
9. skeptical attitude
10. playfulness of tone (designed to prepare the reader for the experiment in thinking)
11. critical note (invitation to co-judge)
12. the tendency to refashion culturally what has already been given cultural form (*Gestaltung von Gestaltetem*) (41)

These qualities will inform later close readings of essays in the case studies of women's essays to follow.

McCarthy goes beyond a mere topology of the essayistic mode, however, and seeks to explain the connection between this mode and the communicative acts that were central to the establishment of a public sphere in the eighteenth century. He reads Habermas's *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* (1981) as a continued and intensified investigation of "reciprocal Enlightenment" first proposed in

Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. McCarthy focuses on Habermas's depiction of "argument as process" for explaining communicative aspects of the essay, because it incorporates a desire on the part of both participants to truly understand one another. Moreover, Habermas explicitly connects it to rhetoric (47-48). McCarthy's reconstruction of Habermas's argument reveals that the communicative act is based on the mutual participation of speaker and listener in a shared context, a context that is constantly changing. Thus any mutual understanding achieved must constantly be questioned and reevaluated (52). In another move, McCarthy connects these principles to essayistic writing during the Enlightenment. He identifies four "fundamental traits of communicative action: *intersubjectivity, principle of flux, perspective of the listener, and discourse as interpretation*. All four qualities underscore the need to establish a common, mutually determined basis of interaction." These attributes he relates to the "clear expectations of the progressive essayist in the Age of Enlightenment" (54).

In essence, McCarthy characterizes the essayistic attitude as the best mode for propagating Enlightenment thought. As we know, true Enlightenment was very much devoted to nurturing critical thinking as a means of recognizing and rejecting prejudice (72). It was understood that only through critical self-reflection could an individual reach his or her full potential and, in this way, carry the movement of Enlightenment forward. The belief in this progress of the human race towards perfection derives from both Hellenic and Judeo-Christian idealism (74). Ultimately this movement towards a perfect society cannot be contained in individual

perfection alone, but move into the public sphere. The conclusion of his chapter on “the World of Eighteenth Century Thought” succinctly sums up this connection:

While the Enlightenment occasioned a radical restructuring of cultural institutions and literary life in the eighteenth century, its essential philosophical and anthropological principles found expression in periodical literature, much of which can be classified as essayistic. When we consider that Enlighteners from Thomasius to Lessing to Kant and Wieland all subscribed to the principle of free intellectual discourse in full view of the public eye as the only sure means of safeguarding against prejudice and as the test of one’s own critical thinking, it is easy to understand why the eighteenth century saw the rise of the modern phenomenon of public opinion. Nor is it astonishing that the uninhibited form of essayistic writing rose to the fore in an atmosphere of public debate (McCarthy 87).

As a part of the burgeoning journalistic landscape, the essay was the most effective medium to portray and propagate the principles of critical thought.

In an earlier article in the *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* on the Wieland’s essayistic journalism McCarthy reveals more explicitly the connection between essayism and journalism. The distinctions he reveals are applicable to other literary authors as well. McCarthy identifies three levels of writers: poets, essayists, and journalists. Poets write for a literary elite that remains small and select - an audience very similar to the poets themselves. Journalists, on the other hand, address a large anonymous audience, a choice that is accompanied by abandoning literary styles that unduly challenge that large audience. Essayists lie between the extremes of “small” and “large.” They maintain high literary aspirations for their compositions, but are still interested in trying to reach as wide a reading audience as is possible (“Poet as Journalist” 93). A balance must be struck between aesthetic standards and broad popularity, with the goal of trying to educate

the taste and the reading habits of that wider public. This approach will be evident in the case studies to follow, most of which were originally published in journals.

In *Crossing Boundaries* McCarthy explores reflections of eighteenth century thinkers on the development of popular reading habits. The first periodical aimed at a broader, anonymous audience was Thomasius's *Monats-Gespräche* (1688). This journal was innovative for its departure from a scholarly tone. Thomasius strove for an entertaining writing style to appeal to non-scholarly readers, including women (96). As we saw in the previous chapter, the eighteenth century experienced an unprecedented growth in readership and in the kinds of texts produced. Reading habits changed from intensive to extensive reading. Extensive reading included reading broadly, but not necessarily without care. Intensive reading — the rereading of a single text, for example, the Bible — continued of course throughout the eighteenth century. Drawing on Rolf Engelsing's and Otto Dann's investigations of the discursive nature of extensive reading, McCarthy avers: "the avid reader's passive attitude of mere reception can easily lead to active communication, that is, to a discussion with others of the material read. In fact, that is exactly what happened in the age" (109). This idea ties into the discussion of Habermas's notion of communicative action. Thus, McCarthy concludes: "Placed within the history of social communication, the German contribution to the spate of revolutions in the eighteenth century would appear as a *Kommunikationsrevolution*" (109).

Arguing that this communication revolution was marked not solely by the existence of new forms of texts and more readers than before, but also by an explicit goal of promoting critical thinking in their readers, McCarthy proposes a direct

connection Enlightenment thinkers between reading, writing, and independent thought (110). As evidence for this claim he cites passages from Gottsched's *Der Patriot* early in the century and from Adolph Freiherr von Knigge's *Über Schriftsteller und Schriftellerei* at the century's end to highlight consistency in emphasizing clear thinking as the basis for clear and effective writing (111). Eighteenth century writing, and essayistic writing in particular, is marked by the assumption that "Potential readers have the ability to think" and "the willingness to learn" (114). This open attitude on the part of the reader produced a dynamic bond between reader and author, one that was based on their shared level of cultivation (*Bildung*) rather than on their social or economic position. The author of an essayistic text in the eighteenth century sought out a reader with whom he or she could have a "positive discourse" (116). This discourse was not restricted to matters of facts and reason, but included, thanks to the sentimental strains of Enlightenment, deeply felt emotional reflections on moral and ethical topics (118). Gottfried Ephraim Lessing's preface to *Sogenannte Briefe an verschiedene Gottesgelehrte* (1780) offers a final contemporary manifestation of this new communicative style of writing. Bruno Berger cites it as including the first definition of the essay in German (198). The qualities of "so-called letters" identified in *Crossing Boundaries* are: "the casual organization of the writer's thoughts, a lively tone, a warm and personal style in engaging an imagined reader in conversation on a general kind of topic" (121). These qualities are both constitutive of the essay and the pursuit of general education through a combination of intellectual discourse interspersed with pleasant dialogue.

McCarthy rounds out his theory of the essay by asking *how* authors expected to achieve these effects. The answer is: through the study and use of rhetoric. Previous research by Küntzel, and by Ueding and Steinbrink revealed the great degree to which rhetoric served as a basis for German literature in the eighteenth century (134). In this case, rhetoric was not used to manipulate the reader, but rather as a means to express oneself in an engaging manner (135). While a “philosophy of rhetoric” marks the style of Gottsched’s *Der Biedermann* (1727-29), its roots reach back to Antiquity. The tradition of gallantry, which Thomasius characterized as: “cultivated manners, sensibleness, erudition, sound judgment, politeness, and a pleasant manner” (137-138), drew heavily on traditions of rhetoric. Notable is that these qualities are not tied to social or economic status. They are open to anyone. Indeed, as Bethany Wiggin has shown when gallantry was most popular at the beginning of the eighteenth century, women were encouraged to pursue education in the hope of achieving the same ideal of humanity.²⁴

Audience awareness emerged as a recurring theme in theorists and practitioners of rhetoric. McCarthy’s summary of Bodmer’s “*scharffsinnige Schreibart*” includes attention to the reader as well as literary and rhetorical features:

The poetic work must (1) be entertaining, (2) be informed by an underlying symbolism, (3) abide by the concept of verisimilitude, (4) have an inner ordering principle, (5) must relate all metaphors and images to the underlying symbolism, and (6) integrate the constituent subsystems of rhetoric (*Bilder*

²⁴ Wiggin, Bethany. “Gallant Women Students, Professors, and Historians: Learning, Sex, and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of German Literature.” *Women in German Yearbook* 26:1 (2010). 1-29. Print.

des erdichteten Systematis) and symbolism (*des Mystischen Systematis*) in the overall structure of the poetic work (141).

Citing the continuity of audience and interests from gallant novel to Moral Weeklies, and letter writing handbooks, McCarthy incorporates Christian Fürchtegott Gellert's contemporary advice that writing (especially letter writing) should follow the "natural sequence of one's thoughts" (143). Central to McCarthy's consideration of rhetoric is Wieland's *Theorie und Geschichte der Red-Kunst und Dicht-Kunst* (*Theory and History of Rhetoric and Poetry*) (1757), in which Wieland gives detailed accounts of how rhetorical elements organize a text. The *dispositio* denotes the logical arrangement of evidence. The *inventio* designates the accumulation of evidence included in a text in six parts: *exordium* (hook) *expositio* (accounting of chronological facts/logical steps) *divisio* (set limits to topic) *confirmatio* (evidence in support of view) *confutatio* (opposing views presented and refuted) *conclusio* ("leave the audience with a single, dominant impression"). Finally, the *elocutio* addresses "the means of expressing an idea or emotion" (145-147). Together, these elements harmonize with one another, creating a text that is both logically arranged and argued, but balanced with an artistic expression. Although Wieland's treatise was directed at oratory, much of what he explained can be applied to other kinds of texts. "Many of the boundaries between pure poetry and pure rhetoric were dismantled in the consummate expression of ideas and emotions so that the two merged together" (155).

What does my present study gain from rehearsing arguments in *Crossing Boundaries*? First, the list of twelve qualities of essayistic writing can serve as a guide for establishing the classification of selected texts in the essayistic mode.

Applying them to writings by women will allow me to demonstrate that women essayists were active participants in the mode of writing that established the new open discourse of the public sphere. My evidence challenges Hull's assertion, addressed in the previous chapter, that women were not "producers of discourse." By writing in the essayistic mode, even on non-political subjects, women were active participants in published cultural debates. Secondly, McCarthy's re-evaluation of the significance of "popularity" for Enlightenment authors, and its embrace of "right feeling" along with "right thinking" helps us reassess women's journals as mainstream undertakings and to counter the critique that their tone was too popular or too sentimental to be taken seriously as works of literary value. On the contrary, precisely the qualities cited reveal the authors' commitment to the project of the Enlightenment. Third, McCarthy's analysis of the role of rhetoric in shaping the writing and thinking of authors is thus important for the demystification process it entailed. With the tools for clear thinking and writing spelled out in style guides widely available, women clearly learned to appropriate modes of writing previously the domain of the formally educated. The fact that many women who wrote essays also wrote in other genres strongly suggests their awareness of the different modes of collaboration in the public experiment to improve the individual and broader society.

Essay and Argumentation Theory

The most recent contribution to a theory of the essay is René Pfammatter's *Essay — Anspruch und Möglichkeit. Plädoyer für die Erkenntniskraft einer*

unwissenschaftlichen Darstellungsform (2002). Pfammatter adds to the understanding of essayistic writing as a particular communicative stance by drawing on the principles of argumentation theory. Argumentation theory developed in the mid-twentieth century, and attempts to integrate a complete theory of argumentation by drawing on modern incarnations of rhetoric and logic, and supplementing them with research from psychology, literary studies, and sociology. Although no comprehensive theory of argumentation exists yet, Pfammatter finds essays to be ideal case studies for various kinds of arguments. More generally, scientific argumentation is only one limited aspect of argumentation (125). Essays, scientific or otherwise, reflect what was considered “effective” argumentation at their particular historical and cultural moment. Drawing on roots in the tradition of the disputation model of education from ancient Greece and its rejuvenation in Humanism, argumentation gained particular relevance beyond the academic sphere in the wake of the French Revolution and the corresponding importance of the shaping of opinion in the public sphere (123). Pfammatter suggests that the essay developed into the ultimate “alternative place” for public discussions between individuals, and is crucial to the development of a public sphere and our current concept of how public opinion is formed (125-26).

Pfammatter’s definition of the essay as form is not innovative, but provides a thorough distillation of previous research. He tries to separate as much as possible the definition of the essay from an assessment of its aesthetic value, and rejects definitions of the essay that use extratextual markers such as “Persönlichkeit des Autors”, “ausgewählte Leserschaft” or “Publikationsumfeld” as criteria for inclusion

(34). No text can be labeled as an essay solely on the basis of authorship, audience, or distribution (36). Two points rise to the fore in Pfammatter's view: 1. the essay is non-fictional, and 2. it is literary prose. This does not exclude the possibility of stories built into an essay (in the form of "Fiktionsblasen") (50). In order to separate the recognition of a text as "literary" from ahistorical preferences and tastes, Pfammatter describes different levels of aesthetic awareness. The first is an immediate experience of being caught up in the beauty of a text, the second, a detached admiration of the technical agility that the text represents, the third, an appreciation of the text's historical appeal, even if it does not entice today's reader. All are aesthetic judgments and are a part of a literary interpretation, without being subject to changing taste and schools of thought (56-57). In spite of his insistence that the reading public does not define an essay, the intended audience of an essay shapes the communicative stance the author takes in regards to her audience (117).

The intersection between the aesthetic and non-fictional character of an essay can be analyzed by considering how the essay is "argued." Pfammatter's definition of the goal of any argument is to convince a listener of the acceptability of one's assertion. Both listener and speaker share a raster of qualities. Both are receptive, attentive, and capable of speaking, of judging, and of understanding. This parity between speaker and listener is crucial for the establishment of a civil society. This equality in argument is radical when used by women who, depending on when and where they live, would have lacked the skills to follow and create an argument in this manner. Pfammatter also suggests that a rare quality of the essay is its fluctuation between the presentation of knowledge and search for that same

knowledge (141). Reminiscent of Lessing's admonition that the search for knowledge is more valuable than knowledge itself, this fluctuation amounts to an alternation between subjective proximity and critical distance on the part of the author to the subject at hand.

Most relevant to my purposes is Pfammatter's insistence that, the author is speaking as herself in the essay. This does not mean that every essay is necessarily autobiographical in nature, but it suggests that the essay mode represents the point of view of a particular individual:

Im Essay spricht der Autor als er selbst. Mit dem, was er sagt, und mit der Art und Weise, wie er dies ausführt, will er als er selbst identifiziert werden. Was er ausdrückt, entspricht seinen persönlichen Ansichten und Meinungen. Durch den Essay werden diese gewissermaßen öffentlich gemacht. ... Essays sind keine anonymen Texte, sondern tragen das Signum ihres Urhebers. Das Prinzip der betonten Subjektivität im Essay ist immer ein Bezug auf das konkrete Subjekt des Verfassers. (48)²⁵

This argument is consistent with Pfammatter's requirement that essays cannot be fictional, because the author is always writing from a personal standpoint, rather than from the point of view of a fictional narrator or character. The expectation that the essay represents an individual's perspective is much more the case with an informal essay that is based on personal reflection. An intimate tone contrasts with the objectivity of the formal essay. Even in a formal essay, however, the choice of

²⁵ In the essay, the author speaks as himself. Through what he says and through the way in which he says it, he wants to be identified as himself. What he expresses corresponds to his personal views and opinions. Through the essay, these last are in a sense made public. ... Essays are not anonymous texts, rather, they bear the sign of their creator. The principal of emphasized subjectivity in the essay is always a reference to the concrete subject of the author.

topic, objective stance, and style of writing all reflect and refer exclusively to the author. Even anonymous texts reference one unique, if unidentified, individual. It is precisely the fact that the author is speaking as him or herself that demands the protection that anonymity affords, if what is being said is in any way groundbreaking or unusual. In these assertions, Pfammatter does not reflect on the possible inconsistency between the essay's direct reference to an individual author and argumentation theory's insistence on parity between speakers and listeners. If an essay is characterized as bearing the mark of its author, it must also be marked by that author's social standing in the eyes of the reader, who may or may not recognize the author as an intellectual peer. This point is particularly relevant when considering essays by authors from marginalized groups.

At the end of his book, Pfammatter creates an *Explikationsvorschlag*, a list of characteristics that every essay must have to meet the definition of the genre (160-162). The first five leave the least room for interpretation: an essay must be (1) non-fiction, (2) prose, (3) not a single sentence, and can be read in one sitting, and have (4) a title, and (5) a subjective, self-reflective speaker (160). The second half of the list contains qualities that lend themselves to literary interpretation. The sixth quality, "eine sorgfältige sprachlich-stilistische Ausgestaltung" has six sub groups, each of which suggests one example of what "meticulous linguistic arrangement" might entail. The seventh quality (7) is a specific communicative situation in which the author addresses the reader, directly or indirectly, inviting her to participate in the intellectual process. The heuristic, argumentative, and representational (*darstellerische*) strategies must work together in a cohesive whole (8), while being

guided by associations, dialectical arguments, and considering all possibilities (9). The tenth and final catch-all category lists eleven qualities of rhetorical structures present in an essay, such as convergence or divergence; perspectivity; divergent thinking; improvisation; and playfulness (*Spiel*) (161). According to him an essay must exhibit all 10 characteristics. If an “essay” does not meet all ten requirements, it might nonetheless qualify as “essayistic.” Any text that fulfills the last five, more descriptive points can, for example, be considered essayistic writing without earning the designation as an essay.

Pfammatter’s emphasis on argumentation theory contains elements of the communicative stance advocated by McCarthy, although Pfammatter’s brief mention of *Crossing Boundaries* does not do justice to the intellectual groundwork the book provides. It is surprising that Pfammatter uses this raster of characteristics to return to a focus on the essay as form. Particularly the distinction between “essays” and “essayistic writing” seems to create the need to separate “essayistic essays” from “non-essayistic essays.” For all of the limitations of any given formalistic definition (Can there be a *two*-sentence essay? *Must* an essay have a title?), for the purposes of a project that focuses on the recovery of a neglected tradition of essayistic writing, formal elements are a convenient aid. I am not concerned with whether it is most appropriate to define an essay by its formal properties or by its adherence to a communicative mode. My point is to argue that both definitions can be used to unearth essayistic contributions by women authors. This is especially relevant in so far as McCarthy and Pfammatter agree that the essay serves as a prime venue for the establishment of public opinion. Pfammatter uses

argumentation theory to show that essayistic writing assumes the author considers herself the intellectual peer of her readers.

Essay, Experiment, and Experience

The centrality of the authorial perspective is at the core of Wolfgang Müller-Funk's *Erfahrung und Experiment. Studien zu Theorie und Geschichte des Essayismus* (1995). It examines the role that experience plays in lending authority to the essayist. Müller-Funk offers more a philosophical treatise on difference between experience and experiment than a literary history of the essay. In the distinctions Müller-Funk draws, experience is situated and personal, while experiment remains supposedly objective, verifiable, and scientific. A hallmark of modern thought is confidence in science and scientific thought that has produced a hierarchy of knowledge and that privileges objectively verifiable facts over personal accounts. Equally modern is the constant countercurrent in the arts subverting that confidence. Müller-Funk characterizes this tension as "essayism," and explores how it is apparent in authors from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries as the touchstone of modernity.

Müller-Funk's introduction sets up two possible methods of essayism in the twentieth century, exemplified in the writings of two authors: Theodor Adorno and Robert Musil. Each corresponds to one of the poles of the spectrum from experience to experiment. For Müller-Funk, Adorno displays an "antiscientific" stance in "Der Essay als Form," because of his reliance on the experience of one individual (the

author himself) (10). Müller-Funk identifies Adorno's motivation for writing from his own point of view as a response to the sense that individuals no longer make their own, unique experiences (11). Müller-Funk traces this manifestation of the crisis of modernity back to Montaigne's remark that all he and his contemporaries do is write and read books about others' experiences, rather than experiencing anything new directly. Musil's *Mann ohne Eigenschaften* defines the extreme of the other pole: of experimentation. In this novel, the protagonist chooses to live life as an experiment, rather than contemplate his subjective experience. The experiment in this case tests the boundaries of experience. Just because no one has experienced (or written about) something this way does not mean there is no alternative. Similarly Francis Bacon used his scientific principles to make the case for empirical observation to determine how actual objects exist in the world. He did not assume that one knows how they behave from reading Aristotle's reflections. Müller-Funk suggests that the essay, as a creative product of modernity, combines the desire to experiment with a reliance on personal experience to inform the analysis of each experiment (15).

In Müller-Funk's description, experience, for all of its universality, is difficult to define. He begins by describing experience as a response to being disappointed — a play between influence by forces outside the individual and a personal reaction from within (14). Experience informs most of our interactions with the world in a highly subjective and individual manner. Experience has active and passive dimensions; one can gain experience either as protagonist or as passive victim in a story (22). While a crucial part of our understanding of the world, experience

produces a very different kind of knowledge than experimentation. Müller-Funk opines:

Erfahrung ist nicht identisch mit positivem Wissen, und was es [...] erbringt, ist weniger Wahrheit im strikt wissenschaftlichen Sinne, sondern hat, auch dort, wo es nicht um vermeintlich oder auch wirklich letzte Dinge geht, eher mit Evidenz zu tun. Was uns im Prozeß der Selbstvergewisserung und des 'Sich-Wissens' entgegenkommt, läuft darauf hinaus, daß uns etwas einleuchtet, nachvollziehbar wird: mental wie affektiv. (28) ²⁶

While the concept of validity in an experimental setting is tied to the ability to replicate another's findings, the nature of personal experience prevents its replication. Thus, the personal account can only be one data point in the experiment of humanity. In an essay based on personal experience, the author confirms the uniqueness of his or her experience, and at the same time, claims a place for it as evidence of the human condition. As more, diverse voices provide their accounts, our understanding of the truth this evidence hints at becomes richer. Associations within the text, together with reader's identification with the author's account, connect individual experience to the experiences of others. This confirmation of the lived experience through writing characterizes modern essayistic writing. Thus, women authors who call upon their experiences as women are active participants in a broad project of modern identity formation.

Recounting one's experience is not a strictly narrative form of writing.

Müller-Funk places essayism alongside the plastic arts, autobiography, literature,

²⁶ Experience is not identical to positive knowledge, and what it [...] generates is not so much truth in the strict, scientific sense, but rather has more to do with evidence, even where it does not deal with apparent or actual last things. That which approaches us in the process of self-realization and 'knowing oneself', is a matter of something making sense to us, of us understanding it, mentally as well as affectively.

and film as media in which modern authors address their experience of self. In its portrayal of the processual nature of experience, however, essayism is set apart from these other artistic forms. Müller-Funk avers that essayism "läßt 'Erfahrung' sichtbar werden als einen durchaus vermittelten Prozeß, in dem künstliches Arrangement und spontaner Durchbruch, Absicht und Unvoreingenommenheit aufeinandertreffen" (39).²⁷ The challenges of portraying experience are part and parcel of essayism. The movement within an essayistic text, a fluctuation or dynamism as noted by other scholars, is reiterated in this passage in reference to the careful attention authors pay in arranging a text to appear spontaneous.

Although Müller-Funk draws primarily on examples from the twentieth century (Adorno and Musil), experience has been central to essayistic thought since its earliest stages. Thomasius, as an early representative of Enlightenment thought, emphasized the importance of testing inherited knowledge against one's own personal experience. Christian Wolff expanded this view to include valuing not only knowledge gained from experiences that have direct relevance to one's personal growth, but also experience that has *potential* to be useful (McCarthy, *Crossing Boundaries* 80-81). Unlike an experiment, which sets out to test a certain hypothesis, the importance of any experience can only be assessed later, and must often be re-evaluated as time passes. McCarthy succinctly connects the mode of thought with the mode of writing in this context: "Wolff's stress on potentially useful knowledge is central to the attitude underlying the mode of essayistic thinking. It is reminiscent

²⁷ allows 'experience' to become visible as a mediated process, in which artificial arrangement and spontaneous breakthrough, intention, and impartiality meet.

of the spiral path traced by the method of ‘weighing the possibilities,’ cited as a mark of the essay” (*Crossing Boundaries* 82).

While an emphasis on experience was embraced as emancipatory for Enlightenment thinkers, the experience of previous essayists over the centuries weighed heavily on new participants in the genre. Silvia Bovenschen, in her 2001 contribution to *Merkur* “Der Essay und das Älterwerden,” reflects on the tension of writing essays out of her experience as a young person:

Und auch dies betonen die Gattungswächter übereinstimmend: Er gründet in der Erfahrung. Der Lebenserfahrung. Ein Wort, das mir noch aus Jugendtagen unangenehm in den Ohren klingt. Da sollte der leere Hinweis auf die Fülle alter Erfahrung die Möglichkeit eigener, junger Erfahrung ersticken. Das ist aber nicht gemeint. Gemeint ist eine virtuos zur Sprache gebrachte ‘offene geistige Erfahrung,’ von der zum Beispiel Theodor W. Adorno in seinem Essay über den Essay spricht; und auch Odo Marquard — eine Stimme aus einer anderen Richtung — betont, daß die ‘essayistische Philosophie Lebenserfahrung — also Empirie verarbeiten’ müsse. (159)²⁸

In Bovenschen’s understanding, a basis on experience does not imply a value system on kinds of experience. Biographical details such as a long life span or greater social access are not guarantors of more valid experience upon which essayistic writing can draw. Rather, the interaction between open mindedness and lived experience characterizes the dynamic nature of essayistic writing.

²⁸ “And the genre-guardians also emphasized this: it [the essay] is founded on experience. Life-experience. A word, that still resonates negatively with me from my youth. It meant that the hollow gesture to the profusion of old experience should stifle the possibilities of my own, young experience. But that is not what is meant. What is meant is an expertly articulated “open, mental experience,” to which for example Theodor W. Adorno refers in his essay on the essay; and also Odo Marquard — a voice from an alternative tendency — emphasizes that the “essayistic philosophy” must “process life experience — empirical evidence.”

Based, then, on the foregoing review of research on the essay, I find much that is useful to my own project. In the case studies to follow I will see whether women essayistic writers called on their own experience as evidence that they should be writing exactly the way that they were. Rather than making a cultural tip of the hat by admitting "I know you think I only know this as a woman," these authors examined how the opportunities that they had specifically as women—the experiences of being a mother, of reading, of providing for themselves or a family—have provided them knowledge and authority enough to contribute to public opinion. Women writers experienced the historical and philosophical shifts of the time and used the essay in particular to reflect them in their writing. Even if one were to argue that the authors considered in this study were passive members of society, Müller-Funk's description of experience clearly suggests such (presumed) passivity does not make them any less capable of having something of value to say in terms of personal, individual experience. Before we move to a closer investigation of women's participation in the genre, it is helpful to recount a brief summary of the essayistic tradition that preceded them to demonstrate better how the women fit into the flow of tradition while adding their own experiential coloration.

Essayistic Writing before 1800

The history of the German essay is traditionally written as a history of individual essayists. By examining the short non-fiction writings of successful authors, one can find many texts that fit the description of essayistic writing. Two of

the most recent monographs on eighteenth century essays are devoted to single authors: Georg Forster (Ewert) and Friedrich Schiller (Schaefer). A focus on individual authors might be due to the fact that, more than other modes of writing, the essay has two distinct progenitors: Montaigne and Bacon.

The essay traces its origins to two modern sources: the *Essais* (1592) of Michel de Montaigne and Francis Bacon's *Essays* (1625). Of course, as contemporary scholars have noted, Montaigne and Bacon were very conscious of their debt to classical rhetoricians (McCarthy *Crossing Boundaries* 42). While Montaigne was translated into German in 1753,²⁹ and Bacon's essays as early as 1654³⁰, the term "Essay" in German did not catch on until the popularity of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thomas Babington Macaulay in the mid nineteenth century. In light of this development, any attempt to study the earlier manifestations of the essay in German must establish what criteria of later definitions of the essay are appropriate for these fore-runners, one must also look for candidates under a multitude of labels, such as "Versuch", "Entwurf", "Abhandlung", "Aufsatz", "Fragment", "Abschweifung," "Gespräch," "Bemühung," "Gedanken," "Experiment," "Annäherung," "Spiel," "intellektuelle Reise," and so on (Rohner; Pfammatter 7). The first texts written in German and given the title "essay" were by Hermann Grimm in 1859 (Pfammatter

²⁹ Johann Daniel Titius (Tietz) *Michaels Herrn von Montaigne Versuche* (1753). The more popular translation by Johann Joachim Christian Bode, *Michel de Montaignes Gedanken und Meinungen über allerley Gegenstände*, was published between 1793 and 1797.

³⁰Francisci Baconis Grafens von Verulamio, weiland Englischen Reichscantzlers Getrue Red-en: die Sitten- Regiments- und Haußlehre betreffend / Aus dem Lateinischen gedolmetscht/ durch ein Mitglied der Hochlöblichen Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft. den Unglückseligen. Nürnberg : Endter, 1654. Translated by Johann Wilhelm Stubenberg (Gibson 57).

8). The essay has remained since this time a permanent fixture in the German literary landscape, at times praised for its ability to bridge the gap between literature and scientific writing, at other times dismissed for not fitting cleanly into one category or the other.

Michel de Montaigne (1522-1593) retreated from public life in 1571 to write what became the *Essais*, published in 1580 and expanded in 1588. The collection was reissued posthumously in 1595 (Chadbourne 568). Reinhard Heinritz sees a connection between Erasmus's *Adagia* (1536) and Montaigne's *Essais*, emphasizing the similarities between these texts, published just 40 years apart. Montaigne has a reputation for being a master of the informal essay. His topics were not great works of art or historical moments, but everyday experiences and emotions. He famously commented in the advice to the reader of his *Essais*: "I myself am the subject of my book," (Montaigne "To the Reader" lxiii). He remained true to this essential subject matter, albeit with self-imposed limits to his candor. Having learned Latin as a child, Montaigne held a special affection for classical literature and drew heavily on Roman and Greek texts for citations and rhetorical models (Screech xvi). The use of citations and aphorisms is also in line with the Humanistic tradition of collecting and disseminating knowledge. Montaigne maintains an easy, affectionate tone with his reader, and it is suggested that he wrote as if he were addressing his departed friend Étienne de La Boétie (Chadbourne 568). Montaigne often anticipates what he thinks the objections of the reader will be and dialogically responds to them, in effect, conversing with himself (Rohner 63-64). A relaxed tone, direct address of the reader, citations in support of an argument and as a jumping off point are all

characteristics of informal essay writing that continue well beyond Montaigne's compositions. In terms of audience, Montaigne himself was not sure there would be one. According to the preface, he expects that at best the book will be one for his friends to remember him by. The *Essais* did become quite popular, however, with the contemporary public that had time, means, and interest for leisure reading: the landed aristocracy. Although a volume of Montaigne's *Essais* was a common decoration in noble drawing rooms, it did not immediately inspire a tradition of essay writing in France. That situation changed in the eighteenth century when, in Germany, Hamann, Lichtenberg, Herder, Wieland, Goethe, and Schiller directly cite Montaigne as a role model for their essay styles (Weissenberger 112).

The history of the essay gained momentum with the next founder of the genre, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) in England. While Bacon acknowledges Montaigne in the first essay in *The Essayes or Counsels Civill and Morall* (1625), he is not interested in precisely emulating Montaigne's writing. Bacon admits that he finds short, pointed prose more effective than long drawn out sermons or studies when trying to change someone's mind (Faulkner 41). And in contrast to Montaigne's *Essais*, which leisurely reflect upon the author's interactions with the world, Bacon's *Essayes* are more pointed, offering advice on the right way to live. Still, his tone is not moralizing and aims to stimulate the reader to reflect upon the topic at hand. His tone is less intimate, and the texts remain on topic and do not digress like Montaigne's essays tend to do. Hence, Bacon's essays are considered the beginning of the formal essay, which is characterized by concreteness rather than either abstract reflection or intimate address to the reader. A sharper focus on one

topic at a time mark, in short, Bacon's essayistic style. (Faulkner 50). Bacon's *Essayes* were well received within his lifetime and beyond, but because of their practical, pragmatic content, primarily consisting of advice for rulers and political administrators, they did not acquire the same popular following as Montaigne's *Essais* (Faulkner 51).

Histories of the German essay often draw on other authors of Humanism, the Reformation, and the Baroque era. Many chroniclers consider Luther's political writing such as *Ein Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen* (1530) to have essayistic qualities. Other scholars make the case for Christian Thomasius's *Monatsgespräche* (1687-88), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz's "Ermahnung an die Teutschen" (1683) as early examples of an indigenous tradition of the German essay (McCarthy, *Crossing Boundaries* 171-189). All agree that the German essayistic tradition first came into full flowering with the Enlightenment in the second half of the eighteenth Century. A shift occurred from essays contained in letters to members of the nobility to stand-alone publications in journals with a wide and varied circulation (Just 1706).

In France, Diderot established himself as one of the foremost European essayists (Schärf 103). Similarly, Voltaire is recognized for writing that emphasizes a polyperspectival approach in a bantering, entertaining tone that nonetheless invites critical reflection. To be sure, essayistic writing emerged as a chief characteristic of the attitude of the Enlightenment:

Überhaupt sind Voltaires historische und philosophische Schriften an essayistischen Elementen reich, ja es zeichnet das gesamte 18. Jh. aus, daß hier nicht so sehr der einzelne Essay bedeutsam ist, als vielmehr der essayistische Geist, der in den verschiedensten literarischen Gattungen gewittert. Der Essay

war nicht mehr lediglich Versuch, sondern darüber hinaus eine ständige intellektuelle Versuchung (Just 1707-1708).³¹

The Moral Weeklies, beginning in the 1720's and 30's, were first a translation and later an emulation of the British essayistic style. Joseph Addison and Robert Steele exerted considerable influence on the German Moral Weeklies as manifest in Johann Christoph Gottsched's *Die Vernünftigen Tadelrinnen* (1725-27). Herder even called Addison "Vater aller Versuchschreiber" (Adam 95). Luise Gottsched translated *The Spectator* between 1739 and 1740. During this time she also wrote free standing essays in *Triumph der Weltweisheit* (1739), as a response to her own translations of Madeleine-Angelique de Gomez's *Triumph of Eloquence* (*Triomphe de l'Eloquence*) of 1730. Johann Michael von Loen's *Kleine Schriften* (1749-1752), Möser's *Harlequin oder Vertheidigung des Groteske-Komischen* (1761), and Winckelmann's *Versuch einer Allegorie, besonders für die Kunst* (1766) offer examples of essayistic writing between the Gottscheds in the early part of the eighteenth century and its flourishing at century's end. (Adam 95).

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was a master of the essay, frequently publishing his work in journals. His essays range from art to morality and evince typical elements of the genre such as: viewing an argument from multiple perspectives, and displaying the process of his thinking rather than just its outcome. Friedrich Schlegel's high praise of Lessing's essayistic style contributed to his becoming one of

³¹ "All of Voltaire's historical and philosophical writings are rich in essayistic elements. Indeed, it is characteristic of the entire 18th century, that it is not so much the individual essay that is important as it is the essayistic spirit, which can be scented in the most diverse literary genres. The essay was no longer simply an attempt, rather beyond this it was a constant intellectual temptation."

the most recognizable eighteenth Century German essayists. Lessing published in journals, such as *Die Berlinische privilegierte Zeitung*, but also published collections of essays like the *Literaturbriefe* (1758-61) and the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767-1769) (McCarthy, *Crossing Boundaries* 223).

Travel writing became a popular theme for essay writing at this time, as well. The most recognizable essayist and travel writer is Georg Forster. He is an exception among essayists at this time for having only penned essays and other non-fictional writing, without exploring other literary genres (Peitsch 1). Forster's sojourn in England and his trip around the world with Captain Cook perfected his English and ensured his stature in an English market. Many authors, both well known and obscure, contributed to travel writing around the turn of the century, including Karl Philipp Moritz, Sophie von La Roche, Johanna Schopenhauer, Esther Domeier, Carl Gottlieb Horstig, and August Hermann Niemeyer (Alison Martin 8-9).

While the connection between the public sphere and the essay in the eighteenth Century is the subject of later chapters, it is important to note that the essay's interest in considered reflection on the world made it very conducive as a vehicle for Enlightenment thought, and it was widely used as a tool in the dissemination of Enlightenment ideals. One example of this is the essay competition that both Moses Mendelssohn and Immanuel Kant contributed to, answering the question "What is Enlightenment?" in 1784. Their answers are key to understanding the historical reality of the Enlightenment and are excellent examples of essayistic writing.

The Romantic movement took essayistic writing in new directions. Friedrich Schlegel, a prolific writer of essays, as well as an early theorist of them, has been considered a new source of essayistic writing together with Bacon and Montaigne (Schärf 115). Indeed, we owe both the characterization of Lessing as the inaugurator of an essayistic tradition in Germany and an early definition of the essay to Schlegel: "Der Ess.[ay] ist so zu schreiben, wie wir denken, sprechen, für uns schreiben oder im Zusammenhang frei reden, Briefe schreiben — über einen sittlichen Gegenstand, aus reinem Interesse daran, nicht φ[philosophisch] und nicht π[poetisch]" (Schlegel *Philosophische Lehrjahre* 206).³² The essay's emphasis on perspectives and its classification outside of traditional genres made it appealing to Romantic writers and thinkers, and went beyond the literary form to become a way of life. "Essayismus wird in der Frühromantik primär zu einer künstlerischen Haltung, die Kunst und Leben gleichermaßen umgreifen soll. Damit wird das Artistische als eigenständige Sphäre des sozialen wie des intellektuellen Lebens erstmals bewußt in den Vordergrund gerückt" (Schärf 118).³³ While Friedrich Schlegel became the most prominent Romantic essayist, Dorothea Veit Schlegel, Caroline Michaelis Schlegel Schelling, and Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis) all published essays in Romantic journals of the time (McCarthy "German Essay" 330).

³² "The ess.[ay] is to be written as we think, speak, write for ourselves or speak freely in context, write letters – on an ethical subject, from pure interest in it, not [philosophical] and not [poetic]." Friedrich Schlegel, "Lessings Geist aus seinen Schriften. Vom Wesen der Kritik," *Kritische Schriften*. Ed. Wolfdietrich Rasch. Munich: Hanser, 1971. 390-400.

³³ "Essayism becomes in early romanticism primarily an artistic stance, which should encompass equally art and life. So the artistic is consciously brought to the foreground as independent sphere of social and intellectual life."

Arthur Schopenhauer represents a transition from the rebellious spirit of the Romantic school to a more traditional essayist, earning the title of the “German Montaigne” by Karl Hillebrand and being an inspiration to both Friedrich Nietzsche and Thomas Mann (McCarthy, “German Essay” 330).

One final point will bridge this discussion of the long history of the essay with the essayistic writing of female authors. Vincent Dell'Orto's analysis in "Nineteenth Century Descriptions of the Essay" places the essay squarely within the realm of oratory. Dell'Orto shows convincingly that most definitions of the essay from the nineteenth century can be roughly grouped into two categories: formal essays that take a more distanced tone and relay scientific information to a lay audience, and informal essays that highlight the subjectivity of the author. Dell'Orto chastizes scholars for having dismissed the informal essay for its subjective tone, and insists that it is precisely the fact that it shows the position of the author that makes the informal essay interesting:

Just as the informal tone of the essayist highlights the personal and emotional factors that may color his interpretation of what has been observed, so too, the popularizing aspect of the essay emphasizes the need for new knowledge to achieve community consensus before it can have any broad social influence. (22)

Thus, the fact that the essays considered here are primarily informal in tone, is both an indication of the popularization of reading that took place in the late eighteenth century, and a particular strength of authors who, as was expected of women, avoided a formal, scholarly tone in favor of a more personal, conversational one.

Did Women Write Essays?

To date, women have not been included as major players in the history of the essay. Rohner does include numerous women authors as examples of essayists, particularly in the twentieth century. In a list of essayistic “Errinnerungsbücher” he includes Marie von Ebner Eschenbach, Isolde Kurz, Ricarda Huch, Lou Andreas Salomé, Emmy Ball-Hennings, Regina Ullmann, Ina Seidel and Lulu von Strauß und Torney among 46 authors, yet does not name one example in the list of authors who write about women or female psychology (356-358 and 397-398). The interest shown in women authors in Rohner’s history of the essay is not reciprocated, however, in his five-volume anthology, *The genre itself is not only tightly connected to possibilities of recognition and subjectivity, rather it points in a special way to the presence of the author in the text, who makes his own position clear as “situated knowledge” and thus frequently reflects on the conditions out of which his own viewpoint developed.*

in which Ricarda Huch is the only female author of an essay. In Christian Schärf’s *Geschichte des Essays* there are no female author names in the index. John McCarthy’s *Crossing Boundaries* contains a section on women authors, and looks specifically at three essays: “Ueber einige zum Glück in der Ehe nothwendige Eigenschaften und Grundgesetzte” by Emilia von Berlepsch, and published in the *Teutscher Merkur* in 1791 (287-92); and two contributions by Elisa von der Recke to the same journal, “Blick auf Italien” (1805) (292-95) and “Ueber die Salzburgischen

Töpel" in 1807 (295-97). McCarthy gives a close reading of each of these essays, in effect giving these authors the same recognition as the other authors included his study, and calls for further study of their contribution to the genre.

Aside from this, women have been considered essayists in literary histories only of women writers, and again only in the twentieth century. Early recovery efforts of feminist scholars focused on understanding the social and historical mechanisms that limited women's participation in this mode of writing. In *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen* (ed. Gisela Brinker-Gabler, 1988), the essay is given one article in the two volume literary history, in the subsection "Formen neuen Lebens- und Wirklichkeitsverständnisses." ("Forms of new understanding of life and reality") "Nachdenken an der Schwelle von Literatur und Theorie, Essayistinnen im 20. Jahrhundert" ("Thinking on the Threshold of Literature and Theory, Female Essayists in the 20th Century") considers specifically the role that essay writing played for three authors: Margarete Susman, Alice Rühle-Gerstel, and Hannah Arendt. In the introduction to this article, Ingeborg Nordmann includes some considerations as to why women have not been considered essayists: that women were barred from a university education, and were subject to the stereotype of being more interested in the concrete and everyday than in the abstract, the latter being the appropriate subject matter for an essay. As Nordmann goes on to note, however, there are many letter writers for whom this does not apply, most noticeably Rahel Levin Varnhagen, whose letters can be very abstract and theoretical (366). Nordmann chose Susman, Rühle-Gerstel and Arendt as examples of women who wrote essays to express their sense of being an outsider, a

perspective that is central to their thinking. Although Nordmann's work was a first step in reclaiming the history of women essayists, it is somewhat limited by her own narrow definition of essayistic writing.

The only anthology of German essays by women was published in 1987 by Marlis Gerhardt: *Essays berühmter Frauen von Else Lasker Schöler bis Christa Wolf*. In the *Nachwort* (*Essays of Famous Women from Else Lasker Schöler to Christa Wolf*) Gerhardt calls upon Adorno, Bense, and Lukacs to sketch a definition of the essay, before moving swiftly into a justification of the book on the grounds of furthering the cause of women's equality. Rather than any attempt at being comprehensive, this anthology is interested primarily in essays that are by well known authors, as the title suggests, and that consider women's position in society. Thus the volume is not strictly chronological, but arranged by themes: *Öffentlichkeiten*, *Seelenleben*, and *Spielräume*. Gerhardt repeats the assumption that early women writers concentrated on recounting personal life events, rather than theoretical abstractions, and as such limited themselves to letters and journals (335). She also suggests that through the nineteenth century women did not attempt to write essays, and describes texts that approach the genre as "weibliche Kleinmeistereien eben und nicht... Benjaminsche Denkbilder und Illuminationen" (335).³⁴ In the final section of the afterword, Gerhardt states: "Den vorliegenden Essaysammlungen sollte ein 'weibliches' Pendant gegenübergestellt werden; ein Pendant nämlich, das die Eroberung einer literarischen Form durchs andere Geschlecht dokumentiert"

³⁴ "feminine mini-masterpieces, really, and not ... Benjaminian conceptualizations and illuminations"

(341).³⁵ Although this motivation was enough for the anthology to be published in 1987, and go into paperback as well a decade later, an exploration of women's essayistic writing that considers essays that have somehow achieved a standard established by male scholars based on men's essays are surely only going to give one perspective on the nature of the essay and of women's authorship.

In 1997 Monika Kollmann called attention to a gap in the scholarly record on the contributions of women as essayists and feuilletonists in Viennese newspapers at the turn of the century. By examining one medium and a limited time period, Kollmann can illuminate the challenges faced by a scholar interested in recovering essayistic texts by women. Although many women contributed to newspapers, very few had their texts collected into published volumes afterwards, which leaves the contemporary scholar only their ephemeral existence in the original newspaper (164). Combing through the issues of a given newspaper, only to collate author names and titles is arduous work, and runs the risk of ignoring the widespread use of pseudonyms by female authors (165-6). Still, Kollmann recommends that scholars follow her lead in exploring these texts in more detail. Considering under what conditions texts could be published with a female name as author, contrasting fictional texts and non-fictional essays by the same author, and exploring the connections between essayistic writing and an emerging women's rights movement are valuable veins of information to be tapped (167)

³⁵ "A feminine counterpart should be brought forth to contrast with the present essay collections; a counterpart which documents the conquest of a literary form by the other sex."

Renate Hof gives a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between gender and genre in her edited volume, *Inszenierte Erfahrung. Gender und Genre in Tagebuch, Autobiographie, Essay.* (*Enacted Experience. Gender and Genre in Diary, Autobiography, Essay.*) In her chapter in this volume considering the essay, she does not look at whether there is a set formal definition of the essay, and whether there are women writers whose texts meet these standards, but rather asks the question of how these standards are defined in the first place, and what kinds of cultural work are expected of an essay, based on these definitions. As a scholar of American literature, Hof is very aware of the wide scope and influence of women's essayistic writing in America through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Hof points out that since the essay's conception, authors of the essay have been considered an authority in the public sphere. Montaigne and Bacon were already established public figures when they wrote essays, for example. Hof considers this authority both constitutive of the form of the essay and simultaneously problematic, because of the connection between authority and privileges of gender and class (215). To understand the function of the genre "essay," Hof considers "die *Interaktion* zwischen dem Essay als einer experimentellen Form der Produktion von Subjektivität und der kulturell spezifischen Autorität des Essayisten" (216).³⁶ In doing so, she seeks to avoid definitions of the essay that limit it to a "thought experiment" or "adventure of the spirit." Such designations connote assumptions about essayists that connect them to a concept of privilege associated with public stature or a university education. Instead she looks at cultural contributions of

³⁶ "the *interaction* between the essay as an experimental form of production of subjectivity and the culturally specific authority of the essayist"

essays that do not fit the usual rubric, because non-traditional authors often do not fit the accepted mold of the essayist (Hof 219).

In other words, Hof is interested in the essay as a construct of expectations on the part of the reader and writer. In the essay, more than in other genres, the presence of the author is felt. She avers:

Das genre selbst ist nicht nur eng verknüpft mit den Möglichkeiten von Erkenntnis und Subjektivität, sondern es verweist in besonderer Weise auf die Präsenz des Autors im Text, der seinen eigenen Standpunkt als "situated knowledge" deutlich macht und von daher häufig auch die Bedingungen reflektiert, aus denen heraus sich die eigene Sichtweise entwickelt hat (221).³⁷

This means that the authors of essays cannot always share the same kind of authority in each of their texts, because the authors are coming from different social and political realities. Hof points out the tradition of women essayists in America that dates at least to the 1830s, as a way to take part in public discourse. Rather than the self-reflective or skeptical attitude common among male essayists at the time, these women wrote in a much more defensive attitude, since they were aware that their essay challenged societal expectations. These women wrote about personal experience as a source of authority, in order to step into the public sphere, rather than as an escape from public life, as their male counterparts might have (222). The essay as a form of writing contributed to the growing acceptance of experience as a source of authority. Ultimately, the essay should not be seen as separate from the "real" communication that might have been possible between the

³⁷ The genre itself is not only tightly connected to possibilities of recognition and subjectivity, rather it points in a special way to the presence of the author in the text, who makes his own position clear as "situated knowledge" and thus frequently reflects on the conditions out of which his own viewpoint developed.

author and her/his reading public. Details about the social, historical, and economic realities of the authors and of the public should be included in histories of the mode, in order to fully comprehend the essay's centrality to political and social movements (225).

In Summary

Clearly, then, the essay is a mode of writing that has fascinated scholars for decades. It is intimately connected to the establishment of a public sphere around 1800, and has contributed to modern understandings of the self and the world ever since. Authors of an essay challenge their readers to think with them by modeling critical thinking and assuming their readers are intellectual peers. Although there is a long tradition of scientific essays, there is an equally long tradition of informal essays focused on the personal, situated experience of the author; that is, the traditional domain of women. Still, the history of the essay has traditionally included very few women authors, fewer still from women writing before 1900. The next two chapters focus on case studies of women essayists between 1780 and 1840, as a means to help remedy this lack. The case studies shed light not only on the existence of women's essayistic writing, but how women authors positioned themselves within the discourse of authorship and publicity around 1800.

CHAPTER IV

IMAGINED NETWORKS: FROM *POLITESSE* TO POLITICAL

Introduction

Sophie von La Roche's *Pomona für Teutschlands Töchter* (1783-84) and Marianne Ehrmann's *Amaliens Erholungsstunden Teutschlands Töchter geweiht* (1790-1792) are two of the most widely studied examples of women's writing at the end of the eighteenth century in Germany. They are often put in dialog with one another, and for good reason (Krull, Weckel, Brandes, Dawson, Neumann). Because there has been such productive work done on the two journals as journalistic undertakings, my analysis will consider particular articles in each journal for their essayistic qualities. Their nonfiction writing tends to either inform the reader about a given subject, or to opine on a particular moral or social position. The choices they make in regards to essayistic form reveal the acknowledged public nature of their writing. The tenor of writing is particularly relevant to my argument, because it reveals two different perspectives on what it means to be a public voice at the end of the eighteenth century.

Sophie von La Roche (1730-1807) is best known for her novel *Die Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim* (1771). She continued to write and publish through the rest of her life, earning her the title of "erste, gezielt ihre literarischen Aktivitäten planende Schriftstellerin in Deutschland" (Becker-Cantarino *Meine Liebe* 8).³⁸ As

³⁸ "first female author in Germany to intentionally plan her literary activities."

studies marking the 200th anniversary of her death noted, she is hardly an author who needs to be "discovered" anymore.³⁹ While her novel *Das Fräulein von Sternheim* receives by far the most attention, more scholars are taking notice of her later works, particularly her journal *Pomona für Teutschlands Töchter* (1783-84) and travelogues.⁴⁰

While Marianne Ehrmann's fame is not as widespread, her work has received more acclaim in recent years as interest in women's participation in theater around 1800 has increased.⁴¹ After a brief career as a stage actress, Ehrmann (1755?-1795) became a playwright, publisher, and editor of her own journal for women. In homage to Sophie von La Roche's novel, she chose the stage name *Sternheim*, which later became her penname (Madland 26). She is considered one of the first "Berufsjournalistinnen im deutschsprachigen Raum,"⁴² due to her work not on one, but two journals, each with a publication run of 1000 copies (Brandes, "Zeitschrift," 180).

Both Ehrmann and La Roche sought to support themselves and their families financially by educating women through their writing. Both wrote epistolary novels with moralizing tendencies, aimed at the moral perfection of young women. Although their heroines were typically drawn from the upper-middle social strata, they had a broad appeal for readers from domestic servants to the aristocracy as will be discussed later. Both wrote and edited women's journals inspired by the

³⁹ For example Loster-Schneider, Becker-Cantarino and Wild (2010) and Lippke, Luserke-Jacqui and Roßbach (2008)

⁴⁰ See for example Erdmut Jost (2005).

⁴¹ See for example Kord (1992); Fleig (1995); Kagel (2007); Dupree (2011).

⁴² "professional female journalists in the German-speaking world"

model of the Moral Weekly. In terms of content, both authors primarily wrote on subjects seen as appropriate for women authors and their readers: women's education, child-rearing, and household duties.

The most distinguishing factor between these two authors is the tone they use in their writing. Sophie von La Roche's essays tend to be more informal and associative, resembling a conversation between author and reader. True to her upbringing as a scion of the Enlightenment, La Roche offers positive examples for emulation, rather than negative models as a warning. La Roche adopts a motherly role, writing to younger women including her daughters, nieces, and even granddaughters. Beginning her writing career at forty, and turning to it as a means of support after her husband fall from political favor and forced early retirement, this matronly tone maps on to her biographical reality. As Monika Nenon has argued, writing was central to La Roche's own education and evolved into her means of reflecting on the course of her life. Inspired by her own experience, La Roche encouraged other women to read for personal improvement. In fact, Barbara Becker-Cantarino has argued that La Roche was particularly influential with women readers due to her status as an educated woman from the upper middle class. Of course, reading and writing as a means of self-improvement were common themes of the Enlightenment project.

Marianne Ehrmann adopted a different approach. Never having children of reading age to whom she could address her stories or messages, she positioned herself slightly differently, addressing as a peer young women in need of moral education. This move allowed for greater freedom of expression. Rather than gently

admonishing her readers, she jokes with and teases them. Consistent across her writing is a humorous, satirical tone that has led scholars to group her with irreverent authors of the Storm and Stress. She more often chooses to ridicule the ill-mannered and immoral, as a way of educating her readers to avoid similarly foolish mistakes. Marianne Ehrmann used satire as an educational tool. By choosing to satirize women and men, particularly their moral foibles, she participated in the dominant mode of satire in the 1790s. Even though her satire is very much in line with those written by men around this time, it was unusual for a woman to write in the satirical mode. Thus I read her satirical essays for insight on how Ehrmann accommodated the expectations of her audience for women writers.

My present intent is to compare essays from the two journals on common topics to highlight the authors' difference in approach. Such an examination reveals differences not only in reading preference, but also in the overall program of the two journals. Whereas La Roche suggests a leisurely manner of reading that meanders through multiple subjects, Ehrmann is more pointed, offering much more direct advice to her readers about what to read and what to eschew. For example, by writing about other countries, each author wanted to open the world to their readers but with radically different emphases. In their responses to questions of fashion, La Roche and Ehrmann encourage their readers to think broadly about how they present themselves in society. Reflecting on the approaches these essays take allows us to discern nuances in the contours of the public space that two women authors utilized for themselves and their readers before the French Revolution.

Sophie von La Roche: *Pomona für Deutschlands Töchter* (1783-84)

Born in 1730 to a dean of the medical college in Augsburg, Sophie von La Roche (nee Gutermann, 1730-1807) was raised and taught by the generation that defined the German Enlightenment. Momentous changes were occurring during the first 10 years of her life. For example, Laura Bassi was appointed the first European female professor at the University of Bologna, Linneaus published his *Systema Naturae*, the Univeristy of Göttingen was founded, and mathematician Leonard Euler systematized mathematics, making significant contributions to differential equations. La Roche's father gave her an unusually broad education for a girl in the first half of the eighteenth century, encouraging her to learn multiple modern languages, and know the basics of the natural sciences (Nenon 21). La Roche's mother was responsible for educating her in matters of faith along with instruction in running a household. Through her mother's influence, La Roche developed a strong Pietist faith, and based her later moral writings on this Christian tradition (Nenon 24). Her first fiancé, Gian Ludovico Bianconi taught her Italian and encouraged her in more scholarly pursuits (Nenon 28-29). The possibility that Sophie might be encouraged to emulate the famous Italian woman scholar Laura Bassi, together with the fiancé's insistence on a Catholic christening of any children in the marriage, were objectionable enough to her father that the engagement was broken off.

The emphasis on emotion and personal connection to faith that were central to the Pietist tradition found a secular extension in the literary movement of Sentimentality. While La Roche was aware of the movement through her extensive

reading, it was really her engagement to her cousin, Christoph Martin Wieland, that developed La Roche's writing in this direction. Under his tutelage La Roche practiced the formulaic expressions of affection, friendship, and overwhelming emotionalism (Becker-Cantarino *Meine Liebe* 44-45). While La Roche wrote her own compositions during this time, none of them were published, or appear to have been preserved. The engagement between Wieland and La Roche ended because Wieland had no secure position and hence was unable to support a family. Shortly thereafter she was married to Georg Michael von La Roche, appointed to the court of Count Friedrich von Stadion, where La Roche's broad education served her very well (Becker-Cantarino *Meine Liebe* 48-49). Count Stadion, an official in the court at Mainz, was a proponent of enlightened absolutism, and introduced agrarian, educational, and other reforms that widely benefitted the population. In her role as one of the ladies of the court of the Elector in Mainz from 1753-63, La Roche had to be well read, available to make light but well-informed conversation with the count and other noblemen (Nenon 61-66).

Although she did not publish any of her own writing until 1771, when she did, it proved to be a sensation. La Roche's *Das Fräulein von Sternheim* was the first novel written in German by a woman, and was a run-away success. Although initially published anonymously and edited by Wieland, La Roche's name quickly became associated with the work (Becker-Cantarino *Meine Liebe* 87-106). This success gave her the chance to continue to write and to publish, first with other novels and short stories and then in 1783 her women's journal *Pomona für Deutschlands Töchter*. La Roche continued to write and publish for another two

decades, and was instrumental in opening up multiple genres to women authors, including travel writing and autobiography.

As the first journal written and edited by a woman aimed at a primarily female audience, *Pomona* has received a great deal of scholarly attention beginning with Edith Krull's dissertation from 1939 and followed decades later by researchers interested in establishing women's contributions to the history of German literature.⁴³ Perspectives on the significance of La Roche's work have shifted over the decades. While early scholarly depictions emphasize her minor literary status when compared to her mentor Wieland, or grandchildren Bettine von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, later researchers interested in women's literary history lauded her for being the first "bestselling" German woman novelist. Yet another group of scholars criticized La Roche's relatively conservative views on the role of women in society for not being progressive enough. Nikola Roßbach recently summarized the status of research on *Pomona* by emphasizing the tension between progressive tendencies and complying with social norms:

Die Zeitschrift schwanke zwischen weiblicher Gelehrsamkeitsforderung und Anpassungsforderung; sie propagiere ein konventionelles Frauenbild, weise aber dennoch auch in Richtung umfassender Bildung für Frauen; man solle im Übrigen die Politik der kleinen Schritte nicht vorschnell verurteilen, sondern historisch angemessen bewerten. Sie sei ein zeittypischer, dem Mainstream angepasster und dadurch erfolgreicher Kompromiss voller Widersprüche. Was den ästhetisch-literarischen Aspekt angeht, sei sie mittelmäßig und beharre auf einem unzeitgemäßen, aller Kunstautonomie fern stehenden, aufklärerischen Literaturverständnis von Moral und Nutzen. Dennoch müsse ihre kulturhistorische Bedeutung als eine der

43. See especially Neumann, Weckel, Strauss Sotiropoulos, Dawson, Becker-Cantarino.

ersten von einer Frau herausgegebenen Zeitschriften gewürdigt werden. Sie sei aus kommerziellen Gründen entstanden, und beruhe nicht unmaßgeblich auf ökonomischen Erwägungen. (107).⁴⁴

The many contradictions in this passage are evidence for the delicate line that La Roche walked in editing and writing this journal. Much like Joeres's "ambivalent" authors of the late nineteenth century, La Roche made compromises in order to become a successful author. Although much of the material centers on elements of a "konventionelles Frauenbild" such as running a household or mothering, La Roche explicitly encourages women to educate themselves much more broadly than required for these tasks. Taking such a step, given the historical reality and limited resources dedicated to women's education, was a significant contribution to the discourse of the time. La Roche's interest in a "*Politik der kleinen Schritte*" ("politics of small steps") is bound up in her interest in making the journal an economic success. By choosing conventional material that did not push any aesthetic envelope, she found a positive reception with as wide a reading audience as possible.

Following the success of her first novel in 1771, Sophie von La Roche produced other works, although not exclusively out of financial necessity. These

⁴⁴ The journal fluctuates between demands for feminine erudition and demands for feminine acclimatization; it propagates a conventional picture of the woman, but nonetheless points in the direction of a more encompassing education for women; one should moreover not judge the politics of small steps too hastily, rather value it in terms historically appropriate. A compromise full of contradictions, it is typical of its time, adapted to the mainstream and thus successful. As far as the aesthetic-literary aspect is concerned, it is mediocre and insists on a moral and practical enlightenment understanding of literature that is outmoded and distant from any artistic autonomy. Nonetheless, its culture-historical meaning as one of the first journals published by a woman must be valued. It was created for commercial reasons, and depends not insignificantly on economic considerations.

include contributions to Jacobi's and Heinse's women's journal *Iris*, which were later published as *Rosaliens Briefe an ihre Freundin Mariane von St*** (1775-76), short stories for Wieland's *Der Teutsche Merkur* in 1781, and in 1782 for David Christian Seybold's *Magazin für Frauenzimmer*. When her husband fell out of favor at court in 1780 (Weckel 80), the family moved to the small town of Speyer. There La Roche began to consider publishing a journal, a relatively lucrative market niche (Becker-Cantarino 140-141). She admitted to those who knew her personally that this was to support her sons, whose future careers had suffered from their father's downfall.⁴⁵ Although modeled in content on the Moral Weekly, La Roche chose a monthly publication. Each issue was around 100 pages in *Oktav*, and cost 4 Gulden 30 Kreuzer (Weckel 85). Although less than some other journals cost, this was an amount that would pay rent for a modestly furnished two-room apartment, three months' pay of a cook, or enough to purchase half a pound of tea (Weckel 203). Although she hoped for greater success, *Pomona* was only printed in one edition of about 1500 copies, and ended up as a financial loss (Mix, "Medien für Frauen" 59). Later La Roche republished the collected "Letters to Lina" from *Pomona*. She wrote *Reiseberichte* about traveling to Mannheim (1791), Switzerland (1793), and Offenbach, Weimar, and Schönebeck (1800). Her last volumes, *Mein Schreibetisch*

45. "Wollen Sie beitragen, daß ich Leserinnen bekommen? Sie tun Gutes an meinen Söhnen, denn ich schreibe *Pomona* für meinen Carl und meinen Wilhelm, um in etwa zu ersetzen, was ihnen die Feinde ihres Vaters raubten." ("Do you want to contribute something, so that I get female readers? You are doing something good for my sons, for I am writing *Pomona* for my Carl and my Wilhelm, so that I can in a way replace what the enemies of their father stole from them.") Letter to Lavater, October 27, 1782, quoted in Weckel 81.

(1799) and *Melusinens Sommer=Abende* (1806), contain many autobiographical and essayistic passages.

From the beginning, La Roche wanted to include "Letters to Lina," in which she advised a young woman how to educate herself to be a happy and successful housewife, as the core of the journal. La Roche's translations of and reflections on James Thomson's nature poem, *The Seasons* (1730), and accounts of other lands, particularly the achievements of women in England, France, and Italy, would supplement the letters. After a time, La Roche incorporated texts from other authors, adding letters from her readers together with her responses to them. This letter exchange was particularly revolutionary for the way that it encouraged women to publish their responses in the journal. The presence of letter exchanges within the covers of *Pomona* and has significantly contributed to its fame as a way for women not only to imagine themselves as part of a reading community, but also to step into the public light (Dawson *Contested Quill* 131-141).

Scholars have long noted *Pomona's* conversational style (Weckel 87). As noted in chapter 2, an understanding of conversational tone at the end of the eighteenth century that we associate with sociability could draw upon the "gallant" style from the beginning of the century. A close connection existed between galant discourse and the rhetoric of the essay. For example, Benjamin Neukirch characterized the gallant style in his *Anweisung zu Teutschen Briefen* (*Statement on German Letters*) (1721) as evidence of urbane manners, a light touch, a sense of humor, and a sensible attitude that accorded speaker and interlocutor equal value (McCarthy *Crossing Boundaries* 136-42). Katherine Larson examines the importance

of conversation for the way it emphasizes the embodied nature of the individual, limited by class, race, and gender to a particular historical, social, and cultural perspective. Expectations of female modesty in the eighteenth century meant that gallantry was seen as a double-edged sword for women. Pleasant conversation was a hallmark of proper social upbringing, but carried the potential for accusations of misplaced intimacy. La Roche was familiar with regulating the “appropriateness” of a given topic for conversation from her many years as a court official’s wife, and presumably adept at avoiding social missteps. She was similarly careful in the choice of content for her journal, and in the examples to follow uses conversational strategies to side step direct answers to possibly controversial topics.

Particularly the years spent at Warthausen, the country estate of Graf Stadion outside Biberach a.d. Riss helped La Roche develop skills and strategies in reading and conversation that served her well as editor of *Pomona*. She practiced the popular method of the *florilegium*, or “Blumenlese,” a humanistic tradition that reaches back many centuries, as evidenced by Erasmus’s *Adagia*, consisting of passages drawn from ancient authors. In La Roche’s case, interesting passages were collected from books brought to her each morning by her husband to be pondered and possibly memorized (Becker-Cantarino “Lektüren” 212). Rather than selecting passages for her general education, La Roche was expected to think of a way to bring up what she had read in conversation with the count, in “eine leichte, schickliche Einkleidung” (“a subtle, suitable investiture”)(quoted in Becker-Cantarino

"Lektüren" 212).⁴⁶ I want to suggest that this training shaped the way La Roche approached her writing. Her essayistic texts are characterized by a light and sociable tone, a free association between tangentially connected ideas, and an attempt to bring important ideas or passages from her reading to her readers in a "schickliche Einkleidung." A closer look at the first essays in *Pomona* reveals that this conversational tone has three elements found in her later compositions. They are: first, including other speakers, second, answering a question raised by that discussion in an indirect way, and third, finding a socially acceptable way of addressing a possibly controversial topic.

La Roche's emphasis on a conversational mode is apparent from the start. The opening of *Pomona* consists of two parts: a briefer text titled "An meine Leserinnen," ("to my [female] readers") barely two pages in length, and "Veranlassung der Pomona," ("Origination for Pomona") at ten pages a somewhat longer piece, although not nearly as long as the main articles in many issues. "An meine Leserinnen" begins by positioning itself as part of a conversation, in this case, a conversation about what is helpful and pleasant for women to read, as depicted in the choice of texts by editors of two other women's journals. "Das Magazin für Frauenzimmer und das Jahrbuch der Denkwürdigkeiten für das schöne Geschlecht — zeigen meinen Leserinnen, was teutsche Männer uns nützlich und gefällig achten. Pomona — wird Ihnen sagen, was ich als Frau dafür halte" (3).⁴⁷ This sentence, cited

46. Sophie von La Roche, *Melusinens Sommer=Abende* p. li, quoted in Becker-Cantarino.

47 "The Magazine for Women and the Almanac of Things Worth Considering for the Lovely Sex — these show my [female] readers what German men regard as useful

by nearly every scholar who has turned to *Pomona*, has variously been interpreted as "nothing less than quite bold and radical" (DiFino 113), "stolze weibliche Selbstbehauptung" ("proud feminine self-assertion") (Weckel 84), or simply "gegenüber ihrer männlichen Konkurrenz eine Differenzqualität" ("a differentiating quality vis-a-vis her male competition")(Birkner and Mix 229). For all of the possible interpretations presented in regards to this passage's historical significance, rhetorically what it does is encourage readers to see themselves as participating, even if vicariously, in a conversation that has already begun. La Roche and her readers are not insisting that women be a topic of public discussion. Indeed, much is already being said and written for them and about them! Now this conversation will be continued by a woman. As an expert in proper conversational tone from her time at court, La Roche performs the act of conversation, of "taking turns," as it were, with other speakers. This approach is typical of the compromises and tensions mentioned in Sotiropoulos's summary quoted earlier. On the one hand, this opening could be interpreted as characterizing La Roche's editorial role as a domestic conversation between women, and therefore conforming to contemporary gendered conventions of privacy. On the other hand, La Roche's acknowledgement that it is other journals she is conversing with, and the fact that this exchange is occurring in print at a time when it was unusual for a woman to publish, make it very public indeed. Not only is La Roche interested in educating her reader through the content of the articles, but by writing in the conversational tone of the elite, she also models the socially acceptable way for women to express themselves in public.

and agreeable about us. *Pomona* — will show them what I, as I woman, think on that account."

"Veranlassung der Pomona" picks up in a conversational style as well, by posing a question from an imagined reader: "Vielleicht fragt eine geistvolle Leserin dieser Blätter: 'Wie kam es, daß eine Frau den Muth hatte, eine so große öffentliche Erscheinung zu machen?'" (5).⁴⁸ This remark acknowledges the novelty of *Pomona*, as the first women's journal edited by a woman, and published under La Roche's name, as a continuation of her well-known work as a novelist. By opening with a question from a young reader (a frequent pattern in *Pomona's* essays) La Roche models the open "literary group" community fostered by her journal (Dawson 135). The fact that a "geistvolle Leserin" poses the question and thereby points to the courageous act of publishing a journal under one's own name as a woman underscores why we can appropriately refer to the passage as a contextualized conversation rather than mark it a dialogue.

To answer the question, La Roche recounts her walk with a friend through the countryside on a fall afternoon. While reading this one is immediately reminded of Montaigne's definition of the essay as a meandering walk with friends (Rohner 687-689). Although La Roche suggested she will answer her reader, the conversation La Roche has on her walk has nothing to do with publishing or writing at all. Such a non-linear method of recurs in most of La Roche's essays considered further in this study. The pattern is as follows: beginning with a question, La Roche remembers an account of something else, often apparently unrelated. This anecdote initiates an associative chain, supported by a minor amount of narrative, which

⁴⁸ "A quick-witted female reader of these pages might ask: 'How is it that a woman had the courage to make such a great public appearance?'"

eventually circles back to answering the question. In this case, La Roche deflects the question of how she came to publish a journal, and any accompanying accusation that her writing was for her own materialistic gain, by describing a walk through the countryside, which seems at first to be activity very far removed from sitting at a desk and writing.⁴⁹

Often the detours that La Roche takes in essays are due to the possibly controversial nature of the question she has been asked. Rather than "take the bait," La Roche genteelly steers the conversation to more suitable topics, until she has managed to answer the question after all, even if not head-on. La Roche uses this indirect strategy to explain how she chose to publish *Pomona*. After their walk, La Roche and her companion come home to find a "liebenswürdige junge Freundin" ("dear young friend") waiting for her, who admires La Roche's "erudition." The young woman fears she will never have the time to acquire similar knowledge. La Roche reassures her that it is possible and offers to read through Thomson's *Jahreszeiten* with her while her friend is in Speyer. James Thomson's "The four seasons" (1726) had arisen over the course of the conversation La Roche ostensibly had while walking. A translation of *The Seasons* forms the core component of the first issues of the journal. Ultimately, this friend suggests La Roche commit her reflections to paper, so the friend can study them upon her return home and share La Roche's musings with others. This passage highlights the initial, ideal reader of *Pomona*: a young friend, who wishes to know more about the world, but isn't

49. La Roche tended to write from the perspective of the invented persona, Pomona, but often broke character by referring to personal details, such as the fact that she was living in Speyer. See also Dawson 141-147; Worley.

interested in "scholarliness." It also contextualizes La Roche's editorial undertaking as a response to a request for help from a friend, rather than a self-initiated project. This deflection of La Roche's agency continues in her depiction of her initial reaction to the suggestion that she make a permanent record of her reflections. Unconvinced by the young woman's suggestion, La Roche continues to discuss publishing what will become *Pomona* with friends over the course of the evening: "Halb scherzend, halb ernsthaft verschwazten wir den ganzen Abend damit" (14).⁵⁰ The use of the words "joking" and "chatted" lend La Roche's depiction an air of unprofessionalism, in line with expectations that women would not pursue professional engagement as authors or editors. This anecdote also suggests that La Roche wanted to characterize *Pomona* as a collaborative effort from the beginning, although it would take a few issues for letters from readers to be incorporated and answered in the journal. La Roche stages her inspiration to publish a journal in a manner that deflects accusations of unseemly professionalism. She achieves this goal by incorporating the perspectives of multiple voices and imagining the journal itself as an extended conversation, a conversation that carried over from one month to another.

La Roche devoted two separate essays to the topic of women's reading. Given the cultural climate that was increasingly hostile to women's education, the question of what books a woman should read is one to be answered carefully. Numerous *Frauenzimmerbibliotheken*, or lists of books for women, were already available. The early Enlightenment encouraged women to read widely, not just literature, but scientific, religious and historical texts as well. However, as the

⁵⁰ "Half joking, half seriously, we chatted away the whole evening on this topic."

century progressed, women were expected to have literary tastes and preferences different from those of men. Scientific and theoretical books on reading lists were exchanged for reading designed more to entertain than educate (Mix 52-53). This change was noticed and often resisted by female authors, including la Roche who emphasized the necessity that women read broadly for self-improvement as well as entertainment (Mix 53). La Roche poses her essays on reading as answers to two letters. In the first letter, the reader asks what is in Pomona's room, to which La Roche responds in "Antwort auf Fragen nach meinem Zimmer" ("Answers to Questions about my Room"). Then, in a second letter, the reader admits that she was more interested in her books, but did not want to ask about them outright. That letter is answered with the essay "Ueber meine Bücher" ("About my Books"), which resists the convention of listing titles and authors by recounting the role reading played in La Roche's biography. Both the reluctance of the reader to ask for reading recommendations directly, and La Roche's refusal to write a "Frauenzimmerbibliothek" show the contentious position that reading material for women occupied.

In "Antwort auf Fragen nach meinem Zimmer" in the third issue of *Pomona* published in March 1783, La Roche describes the view from the window of her room and the decorations she has on the walls. At twenty-five pages, its length is much more typical of articles in the journal. Formally, it meets Pfammatter's requirements: it is prose, non-fiction, an acceptable length and has a title and a self-reflective author. It meets Pfammatter's additional requirements of literary style and cohesiveness and is thickly populated with interjections to the reader and

associative thinking. These associations allow La Roche to explore many more topics than a narrow description of her room would otherwise suggest. In fact, very little time is spent on the furnishings in her room. In terms of physical characteristics we only learn that the room is “large and high” (228), has two windows (228) and walls covered in monochromatic paper interrupted by three doors (236). The furniture described includes a chest of drawers below a mirror (243) and a green table at which she eats breakfast, receives guests, and writes (248). Given that other contemporary journals would write articles with detailed descriptions of room interiors, as seen in the establishment of Bertuch’s *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* in 1786, this is sparse illustration indeed.

Rather than focusing on material comforts of her room, La Roche writes lengthy descriptions of what the view out of her two windows and the many pictures on her wall evoke for her. In essayistic fashion, she freely associates from one visual stimulus to a chain of reflections that take her well beyond the confines of her room. Her window looks on to the church courtyard and is framed by two linden trees. She associates the church and the trees with the sounds she awakens to each morning: church bells in the winter, and bird song from the trees in summer (228). She draws a further connection to the change of the seasons by describing children she sees outside, leading sheep in the spring or attempting to knock nuts from the trees in the fall (229-230). She similarly uses the passing farmers and farming wagons to comment on the light-hearted nature of those who labor in the field, when compared to the heavy hearts of those who ride effortlessly by in carriages. By selecting these images that occasionally appear in view of her window, La Roche

does not attempt to portray a “snapshot” of the world around her. She uses individuals outside her window as an opportunity for teaching her readers moral lessons.

The essay is not limited to the “small details” (“Kleinigkeiten” 230), however. From her window La Roche can also see ruins of the former imperial chamber court, which was burned along with the rest of the city in 1689 by French troops during the Nine Year’s War (1688-1697). Mentioning that the French had been aggressors in this territory less than a century prior could challenge La Roche’s desire to promote interest in other countries. To mitigate this negative effect, she points out that since thousands of French citizens died as a result of religious wars, it should come as no surprise that they could be brutal to their neighbors, a behavior from which both France and Germany have since tried to distance themselves (233). She further recounts an anecdote from her husband, who met an aged French soldier who reported weeping when he was given the order to attack the region as a youth, and was relieved to hear that the city had been restored (234). The inclusion of this historical perspective is remarkable for multiple reasons. It shows La Roche’s dexterity in connecting what could be a mundane topic (a view from one’s room in a small town) with great historical events. By showing the desire for reconciliation on the part of a French soldier, La Roche encourages an empathetic approach to other countries. By educating themselves about how connected everyday sights are to dramatic events, La Roche depicts an expansive worldview that never physically leaves the private chamber.

After depicting the views out of her two windows, La Roche describes the many pictures that hang on the walls of her room, mostly portraits and landscapes, which produce similarly lengthy associative chains of thought. Each picture has some emotional significance or anecdote attached to it. The geographic and historical limits of these stories reach well beyond the walls of the room and her life in Speyer. She mentions portraits of authors, including those who helped her work: Wieland, Lessing, Solon, and an unidentified "altgriechischer Kopf" (ancient Greek head) (239-240). By referring to other authors via their portraits, she reveals that she is widely read, but does not name specific works. She has representations of towns and gardens in England, cathedrals in Venice, and landscapes from Switzerland. These images indicate La Roche's interest in other lands that appears as a theme early in the journal.

In this and other essays, La Roche makes extensive use of direct addresses to her readers. Although many of the anecdotes she recounts have an implied moral message, the passages where La Roche refers to "Meine Leserinnen" in the text often have the most explicit moral lesson. She tells her readers the value she gains from focusing on the small moments in life (230), the love she has for her children (238), the respect she has for her deceased benefactor Count Stadion (241), and her method of associating memories with objects (241-242). Two further passages will be examined here because they focus on La Roche's research and writing. After recounting the history of Speyer mentioned above, she writes:

Meine Leserinnen sehen, wie genau ich mich um alles erkundigte und um sah, was mir meinen neuen Wohnplatz gefällig machen konnte; der grosse Umfang der Stadt, die viele Ruinen schöner Häuser — Thürme und Kirchen verdienten

wohl eine Nachfrage, und einer meiner Freunde sagte dabey, Fragen nach der Geschichte einer ganzen Stadt zeigten eine viel edlere Neugierde an, als wenn ich allein nach dem Herkommen und den Umständen dieses oder jenes Einwohners geforscht hätte (236).⁵¹

In this passage, La Roche reveals that she is aware that her curiosity about the city she lives in is somewhat unusual, and wants to justify it to her readers. She begins by suggesting that it was inspired by the evidence of the devastation the city had endured not even one hundred years prior. To underscore the conversational elements of her writing, La Roche brings in another speaker, the “friend.” La Roche has this friend characterize her interest as “Neugierde,” which has a more negative connotation in German than its English counterpart “curiosity.” Nevertheless, a curiosity about history is characterized as more desirable and acceptable than a curiosity about one’s neighbors or gossip. This reference to curiosity and gossip evokes the misogynist discourse of the day that depicted women’s interests as limited to social scandal and rumor. La Roche does not attempt to convince the reader that women share the breadth of interest that men are expected to have. Instead, she insists that given the fact that women are inquisitive, it is preferable to guide that search for knowledge towards deserving subjects, such as history and architecture.

The second example comes from the very end of the essay. It is interesting because it is typical of the moments in which La Roche disassociates herself from

⁵¹ “My readers see how precisely I have informed myself about my new place of residence, and looked for what could make it pleasing to me; the great expanse of the city, the many ruins of beautiful houses, towers, and churches surely deserved my investigation, and one of my friends said upon observing this, questions about the history of an entire city reveal a much nobler curiosity than if I had only researched the descent and standing of one or another resident.”

the figure of Pomona, the editor of the journal. This is particularly noteworthy considering Pfammatter's insistence that an essayist must speak as herself. In this case, La Roche does precisely that. She begins the essay by saying that Pomona received a letter from a reader, informed about Speyer through Büschings *Neue Erdbeschreibung*, asking for La Roche to describe her room and its view (227). She ends the essay with a similar gesture, distancing herself from the figure of Pomona: "Ich wollte noch von ihrem Nutzen für mich schreiben, aber Pomona sagt, der Brief würde zu lang. Sie mag recht haben, und hätte es vielleicht früher erinnern sollen. Leben Sie wohl, schätzbare Freundinnen der Sophie von La Roche" (249).⁵² In this passage, Pomona appears as an editor, limiting the length of La Roche's answer. While at other moments in the journal La Roche describes her reliance on male friends as editors and advisers, in this sentence she reveals her self-restraint. She also "signs" the essay with her full name. This is evidence that La Roche intended this essay to be read as a representation of her own opinions, presented to the reading public, with no guise of a private text "gone" public.

In the course of the essay, La Roche shows how widespread her knowledge and her personal connections are, in stark contrast to the final two paragraphs in which she emphasizes her domesticity. Mentioning her green table leads to how she spends her mornings: listening to her husband while sewing or knitting, and only writing when she is alone and has seen to household chores. She describes her choice to hide her writing this way:

⁵² "I wanted to say more about its uses for me, but Pomona tells me the letter is getting too long. She may be right, and perhaps she should have said something earlier. Farewell, dear friends of Sophie von La Roche."

Denn so bald jemand kommt, erscheinen meine Handarbeiten, die mir eben so lieb sind, als meine Papiere und Bücher: besonders seit dem ich bemerkte, daß Männer von grosser Geburt und Geist mir bey dem häuslichen Fleiß meiner Nadel noch mehr Hochachtung zeigten, als bey der Beschäftigung meiner Feder; es müßten nur die Hausrechnungen gewesen seyn, die sie unter meinen Händen sahen. (248-49)⁵³

After such a compelling description of the worlds open to her through her knowledge and connections, this passage suggests a highly self-aware irony on the part of the author. In spite of all her education, it is her needlework that raises her esteem in the eyes of worldly men. It is especially ironic considering the discrepancy between how many fewer men witness her needlepoint when compared to the numbers of readers for her first novel. La Roche softens the point of her critique in her comment:

Und daran hätten sie recht, denn wir loben und ehren die Männer auch nicht wegen ihrer Geschicklichkeit im Kartenspielen, welches sie in ihren Erholungsstunden vornehmen, sondern nur wenn sie den Ruhm haben, daß sie ihre Berufsgeschäfte mit vorzüglichem Geist und edlem Eifer erfüllen (249).⁵⁴

With this statement, La Roche casts her writing as a mere pastime, much like playing cards is for men. Playing cards is a meaningful choice on La Roche's part, because of the elements of risk it contains. Much like a man could lose his fortune playing cards,

⁵³ For as soon as someone comes, I take out my needlework, which is as dear to me as my papers and books: especially since I have noticed that men of noble birth and spirit show me even more respect for the domestic diligence of my needle than for the occupation of my quill; it must have just been the household accounts that they saw beneath my hands. (248-49)

⁵⁴ "And they would be right, for we do not praise and honor men for their skills in playing cards, which they undertake in their free time, but rather for when they have the reputation of pursuing their business careers with an upright spirit and noble enthusiasm."

a woman can lose her social esteem through writing. La Roche compares her work for the household with the business dealings of men. Each is a means of increasing the family's well-being and social standing. In this sentence, La Roche once again underscores the fact that she does not want to present her writing a professional activity, although it is a public activity. In this sense, her account of putting aside her writing when men visit is also a note of subtle encouragement to her readers, because it is an effective strategy for following a passion for learning and writing, while outwardly conforming to expected norms.

Two months later, La Roche publishes the essay "Ueber meine Bücher." It begins with a quotation from the reader who ostensibly asked about La Roche's room. She admits that she did not want to hear about the room as much as she did about the books that Pomona reads. "Ueber meine Bücher" appears at least judging by the title to be about recommended reading for women, but what it actually contains is quite different; it is similar in tone to the associative, expansive essay describing La Roche's room. Pomona refers explicitly to her choice of the essayistic, associative tone that she takes in this essay, suggesting it amounts to "zufällige Gedanken" (419). La Roche begins by stating that indeed, her room contains many books:

Ich sitze wirklich zwischen einer Menge Bücher. — Linker Hand auf dem Tisch mit den zwey Schiebladen, wo mein Näh- und Strikvorrath ist, liegen die Bücher, welche ich für mich lese, und die, welche mein edler Hausherr für sich hinbringt — Naturgeschichte und Reisebeschreibungen, die Berliner

Although La Roche acknowledges the large number of books in her room, she obliquely references her status as a woman reader without revealing many details. For example, the fact that her sewing and knitting is kept in the same place as her books suggests an association between the two activities. Perhaps she attends to household chores such as sewing, before she reads, or as other advocates for women's reading suggest, she reads while knitting and sewing. Just mentioning that the two share the same storage location is enough to evoke this connection in the mind of the reader. La Roche gives no more detail, and does not let this reference turn into an expression of opinion on her part as to which of the two, sewing or reading, has priority. Both are equally a part of her life, as they are a part of her room. A second example of deliberate opacity is she mentions that the books that she is reading share the same space as the books that her husband is reading. She then shares a list of authors and titles, without mentioning which reading is for whom. The ambiguity gives the reader a chance to make up her mind herself. La Roche does not pass judgment on which of these works is more or less appropriate for herself or her husband, and by implication, for her reader.

La Roche abandons a recounting of any further details about the books beside her at the end of the same paragraph, by suggesting that the questioner really intended to know more about La Roche as an individual, since the choice of one's

⁵⁵ "I truly sit among a large number of books. To the left on the table with two drawers, where my sewing and knitting supplies are, are the books which I read for myself, and those which my noble paterfamilias brings for himself — Natural history and travel literature, the Berlin Library, the works of Abbé Raynal, Rousseau, Litleton — church history by Spittler."

books can be as revealing as the choice of one's friends ("Die liebe Fragerinn nach meiner Stube dachte, daß man den Geist der Menschen aus der Wahl ihrer Bücher kennen lerne, wie man ihre Sitten und Neigungen in der Wahl ihrer Freunde sieht") (420). Rather than let the reader draw her own conclusion as to her character judging by the books she owns, La Roche offers an account of her upbringing and the great emotional comfort that her knowledge of the world has provided her. She concentrates on knowledge about the natural world, particularly botany and gardening, because they enrich her every day life. As she says towards the end of her excursion about the value of understanding nature, books are a kind of nourishment: "Denn ich genieße den Geist der Bücher wie ich Weizenbrod genieße" (425).⁵⁶ La Roche extends this metaphor to explain that she does not know from practical experience what it is like to plough a field, operate a mill, or bake as light a loaf as her baker can, but because she has read widely she respects the immense work it takes to produce her daily bread, which makes her that much more thankful to eat it. The connection to a dietary staple like bread emphasizes that books and learning are not luxury goods, but necessary to life.

Although La Roche keeps her focus on domestic and bucolic experiences, she also mentions a number of public figures and authors, from David Hume to the countesses Emilia Schimmelmann, Katharina von Stolberg, and Caroline Baudissin. Her friendship with the latter became the subject of two pieces La Roche references in the *Teutsches Museum*. La Roche looks up to Madame de St. Lambert as a role model of the appropriately educated woman. La Roche is inspired by a quotation

⁵⁶ "For I enjoy the spirit of books the way I enjoy wheat bread."

attributed to this French writer: "Ich konnte mir in dem Reich der Wissenschaften kein eigenes Land erobern, aber ich kann es ja machen, wie Reisende, und mich in jedem Gebiet umsehen, welches andre angebaut haben" (424).⁵⁷ This passage reveals a number of gendered assumptions about knowledge. It expresses the acquisition of knowledge and the mastery of a subject militaristically as "conquering," a metaphor that carries a masculine connotation. The figure of the traveler as an alternative to that of the conqueror suggests a more suitable option for women. Given La Roche's personal interest in traveling, this metaphor ties in with the geographical themes that mark other articles. By recommending her readers remain well-traveled observers in the world of knowledge, La Roche resists limitations on women's education. No subject is off limits to women; what remains out of bounds is the aspiration to become an authority. But respectfully contemplating the bodies of knowledge from a distance does not threaten the social order of the time.

Although she recommends a wide range of reading materials, she gives practical examples for how this information makes her a better wife and mother. For example, In addition to the comparison to bread earlier in the text, she offers that learning geography makes a sister better able to teach her siblings where gold, diamonds, and coffee come from (429). She underscores the importance of her own family in her education by mentioning the men in her life who encouraged her to read: her father, Wieland, her husband, and Count Stadion (427-28). Drawing on this experience, she insists on not naming specific titles to her readers, deferring to

⁵⁷ "I could not conquer a territory in the realm of science for myself, but I can do as travelers do, and look around in every region at what others have cultivated."

the authority of their fathers, brothers, and male friends (429), emphasizing the importance of male relatives in determining what is suitable for the women in their family. This shows La Roche's interest in convincing readers, male and female, that more education does not make women less feminine; rather, it makes them better suited for their domestic roles.

Nonetheless, in the act of writing this essay, La Roche is doing more than observing the knowledge of others or exclusively fulfilling her domestic roles. She is actively sorting, evaluating, and disseminating what she has learned to a wide audience. La Roche remains silent on her own writing projects in this essay and on the question of whether her extensive reading has helped her become an accomplished writer. Instead, she emphasizes the role that education and reading have played in her life as a wife and mother. This contradiction resonates with Joeres's concept of "ambivalence" on the part of women writers. Despite her strong advocacy for women's education, and the subtle display of her own education in this and other essays in the journal, La Roche does not encourage her readers to move outside of the domestic sphere.

Marianne Ehrmann: *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* (1790-92)

La Roche's example as a novelist and editor inspired a generation of women authors. One who followed the model established by *Pomona* very closely was Marianne Ehrmann with her journal *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. Both journals cover a broad field of topics: foreign countries, history, science, music, dancing,

reading, books. While many of them fall within the standard offerings of women's journals at the time, it is fruitful to take a closer look at the particulars of each author's approach to these themes as they relate to a conception of women's participation in the public sphere.

This comparison reveals the generational difference between La Roche and Ehrmann, which contributed to their different experiences of the political upheavals of the last decades of the eighteenth century. If La Roche's upbringing was marked by the influence of Enlightenment expectations about girls' education and Sentimental expectations of women's naturally expressive style, then Ehrmann's experience with reading and writing is characterized by a sentimentalism that crossed over into the hyperbole of the Storm-and-Stress disposition. Susanne Kord and Ruth Dawson have both commented on the affinity between Ehrmann's drama *Leichtsinn und gutes Herz. Oder die Folgen der Erziehung* (1786) and those of the Storm and Stress, particularly in the exaggeration and irreverence for authority that play into Ehrmann's satirical pieces (Kord "Discursive" 252; Dawson, *Contested* 228-235). For her part, Madland compares *Leichtsinn und gutes Herz* to Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz's play *Der Hofmeister* (136).

Only limited records of Ehrmann's biography are available. Helga Stipa Madland's careful reconstruction of Ehrmann's life from evidence in personal accounts as well as her highly autobiographical fiction has advanced scholarship on this matter. Ehrmann was born into a relatively well-off family in Rapperswil, Switzerland, but her parents died before she was 20 years old. Her uncle Dominicus von Brentano took her in and encouraged her to read and educate herself, which she

did quite successfully considering the circumstances (Madland 8). As opposed to La Roche, who had a stable family situation as a young woman, and encouragement to educate herself from both her father and mother, Ehrmann's education and reading had to be fit in the time available to her between moves and tasks required of her by her family members. Even her increased access to reading material at Brentano's home could not parallel the material available to La Roche.

As supportive as Brentano was, Ehrmann was quite conscious of the financial burden with which she presented her uncle. As a young woman she set off for Vienna, where she planned to find work as a governess, giving elementary lessons to the children under her care (Madland 10). Despite her contacts there, Ehrmann did not find a suitable position and turned to acting to support herself. As already noted, Ehrmann took "Sternheim" as a stage name, in homage to the character in La Roche's first novel. Perhaps Ehrmann was inspired by the title character, who took her fate into her own hands in the face of adversity. Among the various theater troupes in Vienna with which she worked were those of Friedrich David Gensicke and Barbara Fuhrmann, traveling across much of central Europe (Madland 55). In addition to her acting, Ehrmann published a novel in 1784, *Mußige Stunden eines Frauenzimmers* and her first essay, *Philosophie eines Weibes*. In so doing she entered the literary public sphere in another creative fashion.

The publication of these two works also brought her to the attention of Theophil Ehrmann, a struggling author of geographical and historical texts. He supported Marianne's interest in reading and writing, and the two married without his family's knowledge in 1785. During their secret engagement and first year of

marriage, Theophil did not live with Marianne, but maintained their relationship through brief visits, when he brought her books that she would read and comment upon before they met again. In this way, Marianne Ehrmann followed a contemporary model of letting her husband guide her reading (Brandes "Entstehung" and Fronius 117-122). Unlike in La Roche's case, who then used passages of reading recommended by her husband in conversation with Count Stadion at court, Ehrmann commented on the texts in writing back to her husband, much of which is included in *Nina's Briefe an Ihren Geliebten*. By doing so she fell in line with the convention of female readers commenting on men's work, rather than executing authorship in their own rights (B. Hahn, *Unter falschem Namen*). In other ways the Ehrmann's relationship was less conventional. Although an established male author often assisted aspiring women authors, Marianne published before ever meeting her husband, whose career was not established enough to substantially help her. It was not a given that a husband would condone his wife publishing after marriage, but Theophil helped get his wife's writing published and encouraged her writing of novels, plays, and shorter texts for her journals *Amalien's Erholungsstunden* and *Einsiedlerin aus den Alpen*. Although they never had children of their own, Marianne and Theophil adopted a young child shortly before Marianne passed away in 1794 at the age of 40. The volume of Ehrmann's work is even more impressive considering that she published and wrote for only ten years.

Both Theophil and Marianne Ehrmann pursued careers as professional authors. Marianne often supported her husband in his early work, either as a first reader and sounding board or as a contributing author to his journals:

Frauenzimmer-Zeitung (1788) and *Der Beobachter* (1788). The latter was a journal for the general reader, "A weekly magazine with political-moral-satirical contents"(Dawson *Contested* 264). At the same time, she planned her own journalistic undertaking. During this period she wrote three more novels: *Amalie. Eine wahre Geschichte in Briefen*, *Nina's Briefe an ihren Geliebten*, and *Graf Biding. Eine Geschichte aus dem mittleren Zeitalter*.⁵⁸

With each step of her publishing career, Ehrmann attempted to reach a broader audience. She published "Philosophie eines Weibs" anonymously in 1784. It was popular enough to have two print runs, be translated into French, and prompt a response in Ignaz Anton Adam Felner's "Philosophie eines Mannes. Ein Gegenstück zur Philosophie eines Weibes. Von einem Beobachter"⁵⁹ (1785) (Madland 43-44). Ehrmann adopted the pseudonym "Verfasserinn der Philosophie eines Weibs" for a number of years, for example in "Kleine Fragmente für Denkerinnen" ("Fragments for Female Thinkers") upon publication in 1789. These aphorisms had already been published in Theophil's *Frauenzimmer-Zeitung* two years earlier, and were collected and republished as a separate volume (Stump and Widmer 145). Ehrmann continued to include "Fragmente für Denkerinnen" in *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. In her choice to refer to *Denkerinnen*, Ehrmann follows the trend to eschew the term *Gelehrte* or scholarly, as evident in Schiller's *Antrittsvorlesung* "Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man

⁵⁸ *Amalie. A True Story in Letters; Nina's Letters to her Lover; Count Biding. A Story from the Middle Ages*

⁵⁹ A Man's Philosophy. A Counterpart to a Woman's Philosophy. By an Observer.

Universalgeschichte?" (1789).⁶⁰ Schiller distinguished between "Brotgelehrte," who remain narrow minded despite their education, and the "philosophischer Kopf," who sees connections between what he has learned across disciplines. Ehrmann's use of *Denkerin* similarly rejects intellectualism and instead emphasizes using reason as a tool for self-determination in men and women alike (Holden 40).

In producing *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* Ehrmann was inspired by the example of Sophie von La Roche's *Pomona für Teutschlands Töchter* (1783-84). As La Roche had before her, Ehrmann began by writing the monthly journal herself, with contributions from other authors including her husband, and financing the project by soliciting subscriptions to it from her acquaintances. A subscription to the journal cost four *Gulden* a year. As a point of comparison, the Ehrmanns paid eight *Gulden* a month to rent their four-room apartment in Stuttgart (Weckel 203). *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* was unique among women's journals for the ways that it encouraged women to stand up for their rights, the responsibility it put on men for the consequences of their poor treatment of women, and by a biting satirical tone. At the end of the first year of publication the Ehrmanns began to work with a new publisher, Johann Friedrich Cotta, who had recently partnered with Christian Jakob Zahn (Weckel 285-287). The relationship between authors and publisher was tense from the beginning, as the promised number of subscribers did not materialize (Fischer, "Marianne" 40*). As was the case with most of his collaborations, Cotta was very hands on with contributions to the journal, insisting that it be more in line with conventional women's journals (Weckel 289). We only have a letter from Theophil

⁶⁰ "What is and to What End Does one Study Universal History?"

to Cotta regarding criticism of Marianne's essays as a means of reconstructing the complaints, but in that letter Theophil refutes the suggestion that it was the quality of Marianne's contributions that led to a lack of purchasers (Fischer, "Marianne," 48*) Fewer and fewer of Marianne Ehrmann's contributions were accepted into the journal: by the last few issues in 1792, there were none at all (Weckel 295-96). The conflict between the Ehrmanns, Cotta and Zahn became public, and opinion pieces were published in other journals defending both parties. These articles reveal that it is likely that the Ehrmanns submitted pieces to Cotta, only to have Zahn publish other texts instead which he considered of higher literary caliber (Fischer "Marianne" 58*). Cotta's disapproval and replacement of Marianne Ehrmann's writing serves as evidence to underscore how unusual Ehrman's satirical approach was for writing aimed at a female audience, even if it was very much in line with satires of the time.

Ehrmann consciously uses terminology referencing the structure of her essays as such. For example, many titles begin with the classical formulation "Ueber...": "Ueber die Vorsichtigkeit im Hauswesen," On Carefulness in Household Matters""Ueber Affektation, Ziererei und Empfindelei. Einige hingeworfene Gedanken,""On Affectation, Foppishness and Sentiment. A few Scattered Thoughts""Ueber weibliche Beschäftigung," "On Female Occupation""Ueber die Haushaltungskunst. Ein Versuch""On the Art of Housekeeping. An Essay" not only has "Ueber" in the title, but also subtitles itself as a "Versuch," a common translation for the French "essai." The first sentence continues the characterization of this missive using words we associate with the essay: "Seitdem ich die Feder ergriff, um

den Töchtern Deutschlands die Früchten meiner Erholungsstunden zu weihen, begann ich keinen Aufsatz mit innigerem Vergnügen, als diesen kleinen Versuch über die *Haushaltungskunst*." /"Since I first took up the quill in order to dedicate to Germany's daughters the fruits of my leisure hours, I have started no essay with more internal pleasure than this short piece on the art of housekeeping." (1790 2.Band 125) In spite of these suggestive subtitles, what follows is a straightforward rendering of women's expected household chores. There are no associative connections or interruptions directly addressing the reader, or other literary elements. Such mundane topics and moralizing tone contrast greatly with the energy and experimentation of other essays within *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*.

The Ehrmanns, by including different contributors to the journal, did not use as many layers of narrating voices as La Roche did, and had greater freedom of topics, drawing on different contributors' expertise. Marianne Ehrmann drew heavily on La Roche's example of Pomona for her authorial persona as Amalie (Dupree 101): she cultivated a position of moral authority from which to advise young women readers, while her husband, Theophil contributed essays on contemporary history that were unusual in women's journals. Marianne's editorial presence was felt throughout, both by initialing her contributions, and by frequently commenting, either in footnotes or at the end of an article, on the contributions by other authors. This promoted a sense of dialog within the journal itself, which was aimed at inspiring readers to respond with their own criticism.

The sharpest contrast between the journals is in their tone. While La Roche emphasized a sociable, conversational tone, Ehrmann chose a deliberately satirical

tone in many of her pieces. Although this choice is in line with Ehrmann's desire in reaching a broad audience, and introducing that audience to a broad range of contemporary topics, it was a daring choice for an author at the time. In Germany around 1800, satire was, according to some literary historians, in a period of crisis, due to the precarious position of political satirists in German-speaking Europe (Seibert 14-15). That is not to say that authors like Wieland, Rabenow, and Wezel did not write satirical works (Schönert). Rather, it was that given the vagaries of censorship laws and the political tensions of the time, there were fewer satirical outlets when compared with other time periods or countries. While literary critics of the time found political satire in poor taste, it was also an unwise choice, as many satirists ended up imprisoned in absolutist German territories (Jacobs 61). Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, one of the German authors known for his satires of middle class values, wrote in his posthumously published, private notebook *Sudelbuch*, "Überhaupt wenn ihr in Deutschland auf vornehme Herrn Satyren machen wollt, so rate ich euch zwei Stücke, entweder wählt euch welche aus dem alten Testament, oder bewirbt euch zuvor um ein Dienstgen [sic] zwischen den Tropicis, und wenn euch das nicht ansteht, so halts Maul."⁶¹ This anecdotal comment hints at the reality that most authors did not write satire, at least not on contemporary public figures.

Although they were inspired by the example of satire from abroad, many German authors criticized those who went "too far" in judging humanity too harshly. Jonathan Swift's works, including *Gulliver's Travels*, for example, were disregarded

61. (E 187) quoted in Jacobs 122. "If you want to write a satire on a nobleman in Germany, I will give you two pieces of advice: either choose one from the Old Testament, or apply ahead of time for a position between the two tropics, and if that isn't offered to you, then shut up."

by Christoph Martin Wieland for Swift's apparent "hate of human nature" (Jacobs 62). Acceptable subjects of satire in the late enlightenment focused primarily on personal failings and stereotypes of society, not personal attacks or direct political critique. The satire most emulated in Germany was that found in the Moral Weeklies of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, such as *The Tatler* (1709-1711), translated in the 1730s by Johann Christoph Gottsched. Gentle satire aimed at the foibles of the middle class was used to suggest corrections for immoral or unseemly behavior (Jacobs 62). These Moral Weeklies, as noted in chapter 2, became a particularly rich resource for women readers (Maar 173-200, Martens 520-542).

As Brown has argued, it is unusual to hear of a German woman satirist from the eighteenth century. Although Ehrmann introduces her use of satire as a way of educating and chastising her female readers, I contend that Ehrmann satirizes bourgeois society more broadly, but takes a much more direct approach to her audience, in marked contrast to La Roche's meandering conversational tone.

Ehrmann underscores the public nature of her journal by calling her first address to her readers an "*Antrittsrede*" (inaugural speech). This was an unusual move for a journal, particularly one aimed at a female audience, rarely the addressee of political speeches. In the first sentence Ehrmann continues the metaphor by comparing opening a journal to taking public office:

Wer ein öffentliches Amt antritt, hält gewöhnlich auch eine Rede, in welcher er sich seinen Zuhörern empfiehlt. Warum sollte eine Schriftstellerin, wenn sie wieder zum ersten Male die Feder ansetzt, nicht auch den gütigen Leserinnen ihre ehrfurchtsvolle Verbeugung machen, da sie es doch mit einem

weit vielköpfigeren Publikum zu thun hat, als unsere
gewöhnliche Antrittsredner?⁶² (1)

Ehrmann makes multiple bold moves in this passage. First, she compares the publicity of an author with the authority of a public official by virtue of the size of their respective audiences. Ehrmann's use of satire is already emerging when she uses the phrase "recommend himself" for the official—suggesting not only that the official is at his audience's service, but that he also tends to praise himself. Ehrmann, on the other hand, uses language reminiscent of her time in the theater, and suggests that she is taking a deep bow—not making a curtsy—to her audience. Connecting her writing to a theatrical setting connects this women's journal to the most public of literary forms. This first passage serves to set the stage for Ehrmann's writing as a public act, a very different approach than La Roche's "letter" to her readers.

In the opening sentence from Marianne Ehrmann's "inaugural address" she introduces satire as a tool to educate her female readers:

Nur eins muß ich mir zum voraus noch von Ihnen erbitten, daß Sie mir ja verzeihen, wenn Ihnen mein Vortrag bisweilen ein bischen zu derb, zu stark scheint, wenn ich blos, weil es die *Notwendigkeit erfordert*, mit den mir und meinem Geschlechte noch anklebenden Fehlern keine Komplimenten mache, wenn ich hie und da die Geißel der Satyre schwinge, wo ein bösertiger Schaden die feinere Ausbildung hindert.⁶³ (2, emphasis in original)

⁶² "Those who assume a public office generally make a speech in which they recommend themselves to their listeners. Why shouldn't a writer, when she takes up the pen again for the first time, respectfully bow to her kind female readers, because she is concerned with a far larger public than our usual speakers?" (translation Madland 184).

⁶³. "But I have to request one thing from you in advance, and that is that you forgive me if my words at times appear a little too coarse, too strong, if, because necessity

Ehrman recognizes that her readers might be surprised by a rough tone and begs their collective pardon. This apparent breach of good conduct is justified by the ends: the personal development of the readers via satire. Clearly there is a delicate balance to be struck. Ehrmann feels confident positioning herself as a satirist but recognizes that any satire has to focus on the moral improvement of her readers. This moral improvement will be more likely if Ehrmann acknowledges from the start that her tone might be shocking. Unlike LaRoche, Ehrmann will not be providing an example of ideal behavior to strive towards. Rather, she raises a critical mirror in which her readers might recognize themselves. In referencing that her satire will not focus on individuals, Ehrmann admits adhering to the convention of non-personalized satire. She will not critique particular figures, just foibles more generally.

To motivate her readers to endure this scolding, she warns them that overreacting might provoke ridicule, particularly from men:

Denn sehen Sie, wenn nur Eine unter Ihnen kleingeistig genug wäre, und über einen satyrischen Ausfall, der gewiß nicht auf einzelne Personen gemünzt seyn wird, empfindlich würde, o wie könnte dann das *hochweise Männervölkchen* laut über diese Schwachheit lachen...(3)⁶⁴

This laughing derision is a different kind of unacceptable social tone. While Ehrmann's choice of satire is surprising and discomfiting, it serves to improve the

requires it, I am not complimentary because of the faults still adhering to myself and my gender, if here and there, where a malicious disadvantage hinders better education, I swing the whip of satire" (translation Madland 185).

⁶⁴ "Because you must know that, if even a single one among you were small-minded enough to become overly sensitive about a satirical outburst, which certainly will not be directed toward an individual, oh how the smart-alecky little male population would laugh loudly about these weaknesses..." (translation Madland 185).

reader, who is expected to tolerate this criticism. Ehrmann wants to distinguish this from the dismissive laughter of the "little male population" which is eager to find another instance of women failing to improve their nature. This ridicule, Ehrmann suggests, is one that can be avoided by heeding her advice.

As was common in satire at the time, Ehrmann's satire is equal opportunity, and she turns her critique on those laughing men: "Nur nicht zu früh gelacht, ihr Herrn [sic] der Schöpfung!" (3).⁶⁵ In this case, referring to her male readers as "masters of creation" is an ironic jab at what she will reveal as their equally weak position. Although legally they are granted more authority than women, Ehrmann lays the blame for much of the poor education of women squarely at the feet of men, whose blind adherence to tradition for tradition's sake, lacks any reflective quality. Later she adds: "Sie [Männer] sind zufrieden, wenn ihre Weiber sich im Denken nicht von der Magd unterscheiden, wenn sie im Handeln keine Eigenheiten besitzen, sondern hübsch nachbeten, was in jenen finstern Zeiten die Großmutter vorbetete" (4).⁶⁶ By comparing the wives of middle class men to menial female laborers, Ehrmann adheres to contemporary tropes that emphasize the difference between classes. Although on other occasions Ehrmann sympathizes with the educational limitations of poor women (Madland 42-43), here she uses education as a means for bourgeois women to distinguish themselves. Understood this way, only a woman of means would have the leisure to spend some of her time for self-improvement.

⁶⁵ "Just don't laugh to early, you lords of creation!"

⁶⁶ "They [men] are content, if their wives think no differently than their maids, when they have no individuality in their behavior, but rather prettily pray that which in darker times their grandmothers taught them to pray."

Another way to consider this comparison, however, would be to see the connection between education and emancipation that Enlightenment thinkers championed.

Read in this context, educated women are partners with their husbands, who reflect on their own behavior and the duties of women, who wisely direct the household and their children, and are active members in social circles. Whether appealing to a sense of class pride, or to a desire for respect between spouses, Ehrmann's comparison underscores the benefits to men of marrying educated women. To strengthen her argument, Ehrmann invokes generational distinctions. By criticising some men for choosing wives who only mimic what their grandmothers had learned in "darker times," Ehrmann appears skeptical about claims that the 1790s were a time of progress. From the perspective of this essay, Enlightenment that does not include the education of women and men alike is not complete.

Ehrmann next ridicules the plan that men have for their daughters who should follow in their mothers' footsteps: "wenn sie dann nur einen Mann bekömmt, Kinder zeugt, sich zu puzzen weiß, ein bischen kochen, strikken, tolles Zeug plaudern kann, und stirbt!" (5)⁶⁷ This hyperbolic reduction of the role of women in life is a far cry from the various roles named. Ehrmann uses a very direct comparison between positive and negative attributes, and names them as such.

Although Ehrmann does not shy away from criticizing men when given the opportunity, the bulk of her critique focuses on women. An example of this is Ehrmann's "Ueber die Lektür [sic]," which appears in the first issue. As in La Roche's

⁶⁷ "If only their daughter finds a husband, produces children, knows how to dress, cook a little, knit, talk nonsense, and dies" (translation Madland 186).

essays on books and reading, the question of what to read and how arises as central consideration of a journal for women. Ehrmann draws a distinction throughout the essay between “well chosen” and “uncarefully chosen” reading (“gut gewählte Lektür” and “unvorsichtig gewählte Lektür” (14). Like La Roche, she resists cataloging titles to recommend to her readers, since what suits one might not suit another. Although La Roche encouraged her readers to turn to fathers, brothers, and husbands for suggested texts, Ehrmann defers to the judgement of “Leserinnen, Aeltern [sic] und Freunden” (18), a selection that includes a more active role by women as female readers and as mothers. Ehrmann follows established patterns of acceptable reading for women in the categories of texts she recommends. She rejects “scientific” (“wissenschaftlich”) books as unsuitable for women (19). She strongly recommends religious writing and moralistic texts, as long as the latter does not become too boring, since boring texts do not achieve their goal of improving an individual (21). The third category of books Ehrmann lists is “entertaining” (“unterhaltend”), which includes novels, “true stories” (“wahre Geschichten” and travel literature. Novels, with a few exceptions, are written off as either not engaging, or dangerously exciting (22-24). Ehrmann encourages her readers to seek out true stories and travel literature, because these have the highest educational value of all entertaining literature. ⁶⁸ In her reference to travel

⁶⁸ Through the rest of the journal, the short stories that Ehrmann contributes bear the subtitle “Eine wahre Geschichte,” as does her novel *Amalie, eine wahre Geschichte in Briefen*. This reveals a fascinating distinction between fiction and truth that cannot be explored in further depth here. It could be quite relevant, however, in reconsidering the requirement that essays be non-fiction, if the definition of fiction is malleable over time. This is of course the downside of a purely formal definition of

literature, she mentions by name Sophie von La Roche as author of multiple travel narratives (25), a genre to which I will return shortly.

The second half of Ehrmann's essay is dedicated to how one should read. It was not unusual for a journal to characterize how it expected its readers to interact with the text. Wieland had already published "Wie man ließt" (1781) in his journal *Der Teutsche Merkur*. In following this tradition, Ehrmann indicates that her women's journal is part of a broader literary landscape, rather than separate from it. As stated in "Ueber die Lektür [sic]", how one reads is as important as what one reads.

Zu der Frage *wie* soll man lesen?—Mit Bedacht, mit Kopf, mit Gegenwart des Geistes, mit Empfindung, Antheil, und Wärme, mit Geschmack und richtiger Beurtheilung. Nicht nur flüchtig oder zerstreut, nicht bloß um der lieben Mode willen, aus Eitelkeit, nicht gedankenlos und mechanisch. Wer während dem Lesen nicht denkt, nicht urtheilt, sich nicht Schlußfolgen herauszieht, nicht nach Menschenkenntnis hascht, nicht seine eigne Erfahrung mit der des Schriftstellers vergleicht, sich bloß an den historischen Erzählungsfaden, nicht an die eingestreuten Anwendungen, nicht ans Raisonement, nicht an des Verfassers Denkart hält, der lege ums Himmelswillen das Buch weg, und greife nach dem Kochlöffel, oder nach dem Kehrbesen! (27).⁶⁹

the essay, and why ultimately approaching essayistic writing as a communicative stance is a much more robust means for establishing the long history of the essay.

⁶⁹ On the question *how* should one read? — With care, with the head, with the presence of the spirit, with sensitivity, with a stake in it, with warmth, with taste and proper judgment. Not just fleetingly or distractedly, not only for fashion's sake, out of vanity, not thoughtlessly and mechanically. Those who do not think while reading, do not judge, do not draw conclusions, do not search for knowledge of human nature, do not compare their own experience with that of the author, who just hold to the historical narrative thread, and do not hold to the interspersed applications, or to reasoning or way of thinking of the author, for heaven's sake, they should put this book aside and take up the cooking spoon or the broom.

Ehrmann offers a veritable catalog of proper reading attitudes, both affective and cognitive. One should read with care, with intelligence, stay present in the moment, but empathize with characters, all the while maintaining standards of taste and judgement. To Ehrmann, the duty of the reader is to engage with the text on a deeper level. It is precisely this sort of active interaction with the author that her essayistic writing demands of the reader. Reading is a way for her audience to educate itself, but not only as a means of gathering information. Although reading about situations other than one's own allows for the reader to broaden her horizons, Ehrmann insists on taking reading one step further: she views it as a way to improve critical thinking. In her exasperated final sentence advising those who do not read as she intends to replace their book with a cooking spoon or a broom, Ehrmann highlights the contrast she brought up in her opening essay: women who do not read are destined for unreflected domestic work exclusively. Since her journal is dedicated to "Teutschlands Töchter," Ehrmann is carving out a place for women's education in critical thought. This means that her essays can easily be considered part of the broader project of Enlightenment as detailed in McCarthy's *Crossing Boundaries*.

Mapping the World for Women: Essays on Geography

Now that we have established the main characteristics of both La Roche's and Ehrmann's styles, we can explore the ways that the tone of each author shaped the content of articles on similar subjects, two of which will be give close attention. The first is geography, already hinted at in La Roche's depiction of Speyer. La Roche

and Ehrmann strongly believed that women should be well informed about cultures and customs of other countries. In this sense they are participating in the cosmopolitanism of late Enlightenment thought. They address geography and history as part of their broader educational aim, but the specific topics they address and the way in which they do it is quite different. Each author reflects on dramatically different historical moments from personal perspectives informed by economic social standing and generational identification. Exemplary of this trend is the first geographical essay in each journal: "Ueber Frankreich" (*Pomona*, 1783 Nr.2) and "Ueber die neueste Weltgeschichte" (*Amaliens Erholungsstunden*, Jan 1790).

Presenting news and literature from other countries in addition to Germany was always planned as part of the program for *Pomona*. In her opening announcement, La Roche explains her plan to write alternate monthly issues dedicated to writing about England, Italy, and France with ones focusing on Germany ("An meine Leserinnen" 3-4). The second, fourth, sixth, and eighth issues of *Pomona* in 1783 are devoted to a specific country: France, England, Italy, and Germany, respectively. As an introduction to the issue on France, "Ueber Frankreich" uses a pastoral metaphor to explain why studying other countries is valuable:

Ich stelle mir darüber unser Vaterland unter dem Bild eines schönen Landguts vor, auf welchem alle nützliche einheimische Pflanzen in der höchsten Blüthe stehen: die Bienen dieses Guts arbeiten, und tragen erst den nachstehenden Vorrath ein, nach und nach kommen sie bis an die Gränzen des Gebiets von ihrem Herrn, an welches auf einer Seite, ein im französischen Geschmack angelegter Garten stößt:

sie sehen dort schöne Bäume, und lieblich glänzende Blumenstücke, fliegen über, und benutzen sie. (132)⁷⁰

The metaphor continues by praising neighboring gardens in Italian and British styles, but ends by emphasizing the value to the original land owner:

Die Familie des Hausherrn aber freut sich über die Aemsigkeit der Bienen, und über den zunehmenden Reichthum an Wachs und Honig, weil sie nun sicher sind, daß sie in langen Nächten jede dunkle Stelle des Hauses besser beleuchten, und nach Gefallen von dem Vorrath Süßigkeiten kosten können (133).⁷¹

Through this extended metaphor, La Roche compares her readers to busy bees, who enjoy their work that much more for having the chance to explore neighboring gardens, which results in higher yields of sweetness and light. The other countries are represented as neighboring gardens, which suggests that La Roche saw her selective inclusion of texts from authors based in other countries the way a gardener would choose evocative plants and elements to recreate a style of garden, rather than an identical replica of the foreign landscape. At this point La Roche does not advocate for travel itself; instead she promotes reading about other lands as an enjoyable and rejuvenating exercise.

Although La Roche encourages her readers in an essay from the first volume (“Ein Winterabend aus Thomson”) to learn geographical facts, including capitals and

⁷⁰ “I imagine our fatherland as a beautiful estate, on which all useful native plants are in full bloom: the bees of the estate work, and first they bring in the leftover stock. More and more they come to the border of the territory of their master. On one side is a garden in French style: they see beautiful trees and brilliant flowers, fly across the border, and use them.”

⁷¹ “The family of the landlord rejoices in the diligence of the bees, and in the increasing riches of wax and honey, because they are now sure that they will be able to better light every dark corner of the house in long nights, and taste from the surplus of sweets as they desire.”

names of palaces, she includes none of these elements in her geographical essays. In her essay on France, La Roche follows the popular genre of prosopography—that is, collective biography—and concentrates on French women who historically encouraged education and the arts.⁷² Beginning with medieval French courts (queens) and continuing through the high literary period of 16th century France, La Roche highlights women of letters. She particularly draws from authors whose texts could be used to teach children, including Madame Sevigné's letters to her daughter and Madame de Genlis's novel *Adele et Theodore*, published in 1782 (152). For La Roche, then, learning about a country meant becoming well versed in its literature and is not limited to its recent history and physical geography.

Ending with a conversational trope, La Roche claims she has shown a first version of this essay to "zwey Freunde der Pomona," who suggest she include a few more elements in her discussion of France. La Roche wanted to avoid unreflective praise of all things French, a common foible of the courts, portrayed in *bürgerliche* literature of the time. The German penchant for French fashion is criticized for its material excesses, but praised for the ways it has encouraged conversation between men and women in social settings (159). "Wir hätten aber auch gute Sachen angenommen, die beschwerliche Umstände bey Besuchen und am Tisch abgestellt, die Unterredungen seyen munterer und gefälliger geworden: ja es gebe Städte in

⁷² As Alison Booth's work on the Collective Biographies of Women (<http://womensbios.lib.virginia.edu/about>) has revealed, this is a form that has a long tradition across Europe and exposes shifts in understandings of gender roles in fascinating ways. It would take the present study too far afield to examine this constellation of authors in detail, but it would surely be a fruitful avenue for further research.

Teutschland, wo das Frauenzimmer eben so viel zu sagen habe als in Paris" (159).⁷³ La Roche defends the choices she has made in the essay by emphasizing that her two (male) readers were pleased with the essay when they read it: "Nun muß ich meinen Leserinnen sagen, daß, meine zwey Freunde mit allen diesen Blättern ziemlich zufrieden waren" (162).⁷⁴ This suggestion that she *must* tell her female readers how satisfied these male friends were is a change from La Roche's confident tone displayed at the opening of the journal. The narrative voice in *Pomona* is typically one of motherly authority, in which the readers can rarely demand anything of the narrator. One wonders whether La Roche was really appealing to her female readership, or to those who might question whether *Pomona* is acceptable reading for their female relatives. Beyond this reference to a masculine seal of approval, what this exchange at the end of "Ueber Frankreich" provides is a model of conversation and debate that La Roche hoped to include her readers in. By writing out both the constructive criticism she received, as well as offering her opinion as to why she did or did not take it, La Roche includes the kind of thoughtful dialog that she hoped to encourage her readers to participate in, with her through letter exchanges, or with other readers.

After the eighth issue, La Roche does not expand her program of Geographical topics, with the exception of the essay "Ueber die Erde" in the first issue of 1784. In those months with a geographical focus, La Roche leads off with an

⁷³ "We had also taken on good things, done away with onerous formality in visits and at table, conversations had become more cheerful and pleasant: there are even cities in Germany where women have as much to say as in Paris."

⁷⁴ "Now I have to tell my readers that my two friends were well pleased with all of these pages."

essay about the country of choice (for example, "Ueber Frankreich") and then continues with contributions more or less closely related to the theme. In the case of France, these are a short story ("Weniger als nichts — oder Träumerey einer Marmotte von Madame de Beauharnais") (164-183), two essays ("Ueber das Tanzen" (184-202) and "Ueber die Moden") (203-212), and three letters to Lina (213-221). One noticeable absence in this list is travel writing, a genre for which La Roche later became known, yet in this relatively early work only appears in the collection on Italy as letters by another author. For the most part, the essays consider the cultural landscape rather than the physical. The countries considered are used as springboards for a different perspective on the same goal as other issues: the moral education of young women. Typically, La Roche provides examples of historically significant women from each country, remembered either for their knowledge or virtue, evident in what they wrote.

By contrast *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* takes a very different approach by including a series of articles on the most recent historical events in Europe. The Ehrmanns collaborated extensively in their work on the journal. Both agreed that articles on anthropological subjects were important to their female reading public, and were in accord that Theophil should author these essays (Weckel 134-35). This highlights one major difference between Marianne Ehrmann and Sophie von La Roche. La Roche admitted that others admired her knitting to her writing, she exuded what Helga Brandes characterizes as "Selbstverständlichkeit" when it came to the act of writing (180). While La Roche acknowledged some preferred her knitting to her writing, it was their opinion to which they were entitled, and she

continued to write. In contrast to this, Marianne Ehrmann used language restricted her choice to write, and often defended it as the only way to support herself, and something she only pursued after caring for her household.

Marianne Ehrmann was responsible for the longer passages that address women's moral improvement in essayistic non-fiction prose, short stories, and anecdotes. Her interest in other topics, including geography, is indicated in her recommendations for women's reading. She praises travel literature for being entertaining and informative ("Ueber die Lektür" 25). After mentioning La Roche's travel writing she continues, "Die geographische und historische Lektür überhaupt ist hier anzupreisen. Wir lernen die Vorsehung bewundern, und richtig über auswärtige Dinge urtheilen, die uns ohne sie fremd wären" (25).⁷⁵ Theophil Ehrmann was already writing a *Geographie für Frauenzimmer* in January 1790 ("Frauenzimmer Geographie" 66), selections of which are printed in *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. These contributions can be seen as "teasers" to encourage sales of the larger work. Since Theophil was less established in his own right as author than Marianne, on this occasion, at least, it appears he was hoping to ride on the coattails of his wife's success.

Given the close collaboration between the Ehrmanns on the journal, Marianne's expressed interest in geography, and her role as editor of the journal, a brief excursion to these geographical essays will reveal one example of political writing that the journal contains. Including these essays gives us a view of the

⁷⁵ "Any geographical and historical reading at all is recommended. We learn to admire providence, and judge correctly about foreign things that without it would be strange to us."

threshold to the political public sphere, as conceived of by one literary couple. It reveals one view of what subjects were appropriate for women to read in a journal aimed specifically at them, and also illustrates how the Ehrmanns negotiated what was most appropriate for each of them to write. In this case, they chose Theophil to author the geographical and historical essays. This is certainly due in large part to his scholarly training in that field. But to associate this choice purely with the relative expertise of each individual ignores the historical reality that would have made it much more challenging for Marianne to obtain the historical or geographical training her husband enjoyed. Thus, this decision reflects not only a social convention of men positioning themselves as authorities on the world beyond the home, but also the realities of access to institutions such as universities and libraries.

Theophil suggests that of all of the different branches of geography (*Landes-, Erd-, and Völkerkunde*), he felt strongly that human geography would be of greatest interest to women, because it advocated a comparative approach to women's role in society around the world. In addition to articles from *Frauenzimmer Geographie*, Theophil wrote monthly contributions titled "Uebersicht der neuesten Weltgeschichte." In this title, current events are not considered politics, but recent history, which was, according to Marianne, "die beste Schule für Unerfahrene" ("the best school for the inexperienced") (Ueber die Lektür 26). In the opening article in this series, he summarizes the events of recent history for the year 1789, a daunting task to be sure. Before he gets to any summary of the Turkish-Russian war or the revolution in France, he justifies his choice for pursuing this interest with female

readers at all. He does not challenge the expectation that women do not have an active role to play in political decisions. Instead, he draws on a theatrical metaphor: “man kann Zuschauer seyn im großen Welttheater, ohne mitzuspielen” (“one can be a spectator in the great theater of the world, without playing a role”) (75). In contrast to La Roche's metaphor of the "industrious bees" which collect nectar from various flowers in neighboring gardens, Theophil takes up the metaphor of the world as a stage, one that naturally speaks both to Marianne Ehrmann's experience with the theater, and its growing importance as a public space. While this does not quite suggest that women should take part as political actors, it insists on the necessity of being informed, since political events carry consequences even for those who are not in a position to influence them. This position clearly echoes Kant's argument in “Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?” that an informed public is necessary for self governance. The Ehrmanns, therefore, are in accord with the broader tendencies of the era. Here one can also recall Condorcet “On the Admission of Women to the Rights of Citizenship” (1790) where he states that women's ability to reason is formed by their exposure to matters beyond the home (Condorcet 6).

The article plays a performative rather than informative role. The readers of this journal would have heard of the events that had taken place over the course of the last year without needing to read them in January 1790 (Weckel 135). Similar articles in later months deal with current events of the last month, still relatively slow, even for the media of the time. What is significant about this inclusion is less the content of the report, and more the call for including recent political history within the domain of reading deemed appropriate for women. By referencing

politics as “Welttheater”, it also underscores the journal's emphasis of connecting literary forms (such as drama) to overall learning. By reporting on current events, the editors do not suggest that women be involved in the political arena, but rather explain how contemporary politics can be read as a text from which an appropriate moral lesson can be drawn.

Although written for readers with a similar social and economic background, *Pomona* and *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* reflect different opinions of what women need to know about foreign countries. Sophie von LaRoche concentrated on French models for women's education. Her reflections on contemporary France relate mostly to fashion in social interaction (*politesse*, *sociabilité*) more than in dress and *coiffeur*. Eframnn describes her readers as active audience members in the theater of world politics. Individual countries were not singled out for study as in *Pomona*, but were represented as interconnected actors, the behavior of one influencing the reaction of the other. *Pomona* was groundbreaking in that it expanded the limits of what was considered acceptable reading for women, as seen from a woman's own perspective. *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* managed to expand the parameters of acceptability to include recent political events, beyond the literary or cultural.

Dressing the Part: Essays on Fashion

Fashion was a relatively new subject for public debate in the 1790s. Sumptuary laws were in place in many German-speaking territories, even if by the mid-eighteenth century they were primarily applied to a few select groups such as

peasants, servants, and specific trades (Wurst 368). Many in the period of rapid economic growth following the end of the seven-year's war in 1763 were alarmed by the rapid growth in consumerism in the middle class, particularly with regards to fashion; by the 1770s a vigorous debate took place in the literary sphere about the need for a national costume (Wurst 369). Arguments for and against a national costume tended to run along moral, political, and national lines. Morally, a voluntary national costume would inhibit the middle class from frivolous spending just to remain fashionable. Politically a national costume would lessen the differences between the upper and lower classes, promoting a sense of equality. A shared national costume was often regarded as a means to promote German unity, both between the un-unified German territories and against other nations, specifically France (Wurst 370). In these ways, writing about fashion became a stand-in for writing about other topics that might be considered offensive to censors.

Pomona contains two articles with "Fashion" in the title. "Ueber die Moden," from the second issue in 1783, whose topic is France, and "Spanische Trauermode," from the sixth issue in 1784. In neither of these articles does La Roche go into great detail about fashion. In the first, she uses the topic to introduce an aside about ancient Greek philosophers, and in the second she refers to a Spanish anecdote to write about death and dying, a larger theme in the issue. Since the first essay is, at least from its title, addressing fashion in general, it is better suited for examining La Roche's approach of a potentially controversial or superficial topic. By including this essay on fashion among other texts about France, La Roche acknowledges the close association between this country and fashionable dress. Considering that La Roche's

goal in her essay on France was to highlight the learned women in that country's history, it is less surprising that her essay on fashion veers quickly on to a subject that she finds more educational for her readers. What is surprising is that her educational subject is ancient Greek and Roman philosophers.

La Roche begins with addressing her readers directly: "Meine Leserinnen haben gewiß schon oft bald mürrische, bald spöttische Gedanken von den Moden gehört" (203).⁷⁶ This sets the stage for La Roche to add her opinion to this conversation that exists beyond the confines of the journal, much as she does in her opening address to her readers. Fashion seems an eminently appropriate topic for the figure of the narrator, Pomona, in her role as giver of matronly advice to young women. La Roche takes a different strategy, and defers to "a great and wise man," whose name she does not immediately reveal. This appears to be an inversion of her opening claim to use the journal to express what she thinks, as a woman. Her intent however, is not to become purely a vehicle for male wisdom, but rather, she chooses to consider what a man has to say about fashion to demonstrate that a well developed mind will be able to reflect on any given topic, including something that has been dismissed by others: "Sie finden dabey, daß dem wahren Philosophen nichts gering scheine, was die Menschen, und ihre Beschäftigung angeht; und sehen auch, daß eine nachdenkende Seele alles, was ihr vorkommt, recht angenehm benutzen kann" (203).⁷⁷ Thus, the goal of La Roche's essay becomes not an

⁷⁶ "My readers have surely already heard many surly, many derisive thoughts on fashion."

⁷⁷ "They will find in course, that to a true philosopher nothing that concerns people and their occupations is too insignificant, and they will also see that a deliberating soul can put anything that occurs to her to good use."

explication of the relative merits of one fashion over another, nor an opportunity to investigate questions of nation building, but to teach her readers how to think critically and be ready to converse on any number of subjects.

La Roche acknowledges that this decision will likely surprise her readers: "Denn wer sollte je gedacht haben, daß die Moden der Anlaß seyn würden, Sie mit berühmten Männern alter und neuer Zeit bekannt zu machen?" (203).⁷⁸ La Roche traces the philosophical tradition from Sokrates to Plato and Aristotle, then shifts to Roman philosophers Lucretius and Pliny the elder. Drawing the connection back to France, La Roche suggests that the strengths of these ancient scholars combined are present in the thought and writing of the Comte du Buffon, a contemporary naturalist, and the great thinker referred to at the beginning of the essay. It is his analysis of fashion she quotes (in translation) for four pages. The only opinion of La Roche's in regards to fashion in her assurance that if fashion is a subject worth of Buffon, it can remain an interest of her readers, as well (211). Her opening cited above reveals that La Roche recognizes how unconventional it is to associate philosophers with fashion. What La Roche does not explicitly say is that it is perhaps easier to introduce an essay on ancient philosophers to her readers (and their fathers, husbands, and brothers) if she wraps it in a frame of fashion. As in other essays, La Roche is performing a conversational strategy that can serve her readers well as they learn to read more broadly: nearly any subject can be connected to something that is as unquestionably part of expected reading for women. In this

⁷⁸ Because who would ever have thought that fashion would be the reason to introduce you to famous men of ancient and modern times?"

case, ancient Greek philosophers, often relegated to the realm of “too scholarly” for women, are connected to fashion.

Much as La Roche maintained her conversational style for her essay on fashion, Marianne Ehrmann uses satire to critique her readers’ interest in fashion. Ehrmann used fashion as an entry point for making moral, political and social critiques of German bourgeois society. Ehrmann's first contribution on fashion to *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* was “Die Modehändlerinn. Ein Bruchstück aus meiner Pariser Reise.”⁷⁹ Published in 1790, it satirizes the necessity of visiting a fashion boutique when traveling to Paris, as well as the objections that men have to the “addiction” to fashion that women exhibit. The piece begins in the form of a travel journal: “In Paris seyn, und nicht auch eine *Modebude* besucht zu haben, dies wäre ein unverzeihliches Verbrechen an der Göttinn [sic] *Mode!*” (259)⁸⁰ Although it is not apparent from this sentence whether Ehrmann worships at the altar of this particular goddess, the next passage is more declarative, stating that fashions had already changed “a hundred times” during her short visit.⁸¹ The exaggeration in the speed at which fashions change as shown in this passage is characteristic of Ehrmann’s satirical tone as well as evidence for Ehrmann's lack of interest in the topic.

⁷⁹ “The Lady Fashion Merchant. A Fragment from my Trip to Paris,”

⁸⁰. “To be in Paris, and not to have visited a *fashion store*, this would be an unforgivable crime against the goddess of *fashion*.”259.

⁸¹. “Schon hundertmal hatte diese wankelmüthige Dirne in der kurzen Zeit meines Aufenthalts ihre Laune verändert, eh' ich mich dazu entschloß, ihr auch ein Oepferchen zu bringen.” “This capricious strumpet had already changed her mood a hundred times in the short time of my visit, before I decided to also bring her a small offering.” (259)

Ehrmann begins her critique from a moral standpoint: the money she would spend on replacing her clothes to fit the current fashion could be used to "dry the tears of the suffering."⁸² This sort of satire is in line with the moral satire so prevalent in the *Moral Weekly*, which *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* relies on heavily as a model. She offers a gentle reminder to the readers that there is more to life than pleasure and entertainment, and that a more charitable person would help others before stocking her own wardrobe. Ultimately it is Ehrmann's own curiosity⁸³ that drives her to see the fashion store, a curiosity she builds in a miniature dialog with her readers: "Ich sah . . . Ei was denn? Ich sah . . . Aber was denn? Ach ich sah eben . . . Ums Himmelswillen, was denn? Ei meine schönen, neugierigen Frauenzimmer, glauben Sie etwa ich werde ausschwazzen[sic], um ähnliche Thorheiten auf unsern Erdstrich zu verbreiten?" (259-260).⁸⁴ In this way, Ehrmann is satirizing the women she is writing for - they are all too eager to hear about the newest fashion in Paris, even though Ehrmann has already pointed out the lack of charity promoted by a dedication to fashion. Ehrmann's preference for dramatic texts appears in this mini dialog with her readers, and it is an effective strategy to both slow down the narrative but increase the anticipation for the readers of what is yet to come. Any reader who longs to know what Ehrmann saw, as the supposed interlocutor does, is chastised by Ehrmann's reminder that what she is recounting is little better than gossip. Ehrmann includes herself in the

82. "Mit dem dazu bestimmten Gelde würde ich manche Thräne des Elends haben trocken können," (259).

83. "Die Neugierde drückte mich doch so sehr!" "My curiosity was too strong!" (259)

84. "I saw . . . Oh what then? I saw . . . But what? Oh I saw even . . . For heaven's sake, what? Oh, my pretty, curious women, do you believe that I would gossip about this, to distribute similar foolishness on our soil?"

reprimand against curiosity by using the same word (Neugierde) to justify her visit to the boutique in the first place.

Ehrmann satisfies the curiosity of her reader by sharing that the store had a "eine allerliebste geputzte Puppe, die mir freundlich zuwinkte, auch eine ähnliche Puppe zu werden." (260)⁸⁵ Ehrmann emphasizes in this way her distaste for fashion by suggesting that it reduces the individual to a mannequin-like status. Ehrmann uses language reminiscent of the Sentimental critique of unnatural fashion, which doesn't let the inner worth of the individual shine through as she continues to criticize: "so bequem es auch für manches Frauenzimmer seyn möchte gerade wie diese Puppe nur mit der äusseren Schale zu glänzen" (260).⁸⁶ This is a related, but different take on the moral element of fashion. Rather than critique what else the money of a certain individual could have been spent on, this time Ehrmann criticizes the superficial nature of fashionable dress.

Ehrmann's references the turbulent political situation in France in 1790 are oblique, and critiques instances of mass uprising, as represented by the arrival of a rough group of men. "A gang of Men with devastated faces"⁸⁷ push their way into the store, and Ehrmann surmises from their speech that "they must be Patriots."⁸⁸ This comment is as close to the political reality of Paris in 1790 as the text comes. By suggesting that the men are "Patriots," that is, presumably men of the middle to lower class, that are so ruined by fashion that they arrive en masse to criticize and

85. "lovely decorated doll, who welcomed me warmly to become a similar doll."

86. "as comfortable as it may be for many women, to shine just with the outer shell just like this doll."

87. "drang sich ein Trüppchen Männer mit zerstörten Gesichtern in die Bude."
(260)

88. "Ihrer trocknen, derben Sprache nach mußten es Patrioten seyn." (260)

threaten the shopkeeper, Ehrmann reminds readers of the understanding that fashion is something traditionally only for the aristocracy. The rough nature of the men reflects a German preference and hope for Enlightened Absolutism over revolutionary politics: the patriots of the French revolution are not described as noble freedom fighters, but rather as a threatening mob ready threatening a shopkeeper for the choices their wives have made.

Socially, Ehrmann critiques the stereotype of women as passive consumers, both in her exchange with the men in the shop and by her own example. In dialogic form,⁸⁹ the men accuse the shopkeeper for taking their wives' money, and she rebuffs them at every turn. The shopkeeper's defense hinges mostly on the fact that she does not require women to come and shop in her store, they choose it of their own free will, whatever the consequences may be. When the complaints of the men turn to the fact that women are by their nature weak and subject to the fickle preferences of the fashion world, the shopkeeper turns the accusation back on the speakers "Dies kann man auch so von den Männern behaupten, die eben so gut der Göttinn Mode opfern." (263).⁹⁰ Although some of the men in attendance suggest that this is another matter entirely, or at least that men hold back more in their consumption, it reveals Ehrmann's emphasis on moral failings across society, and not just on the part of women.

89. The last three-quarters of the piece take on a remarkably different structure: that of a dramatic dialog. This dialog has two effects. On the one hand, it removes the narrator as an active voice and lets the characters banter with each other. Ehrmann's experience as a playwright comes to the fore, and the rest of the text is structured as a play. There are up to six speaking parts for men, all of whom insist their wives have ruined them through their dedication to being fashionable.

90. "You can say this about the men as well, who also make offerings to the goddess of fashion."

The dialog develops the role of the title figure: the lady fashion merchant. The seamliness of a woman owning a running a shop is never called into question. This might be because women are more commonly associated with fashion dealers than with other trades. Considering the location of the story in Paris, if a reader had issue with the notion of a woman running a shop, she could be comforted by the fact that Ehrmann was not recommending this for an upstanding German middle class women. Still, not only does this female figure run the shop, she stands her ground against six men who accuse her of ruining their lives. She even portrays herself as a victim in this scenario as well at the end, by asking for sympathy from the men. Surely they understand how hard it is to be at the beck and call of every whimsy of her customers? Here Ehrmann highlights a different aspect of the ways class and fashion intersect. Middle class women may compete with each other vigorously for the title of most fashionable, at the cost of their family finances, but a shopkeeper's livelihood can suffer immensely by changes in fashion as well and depends entirely on satisfying demanding customers.

Marianne Ehrmann satirized the fashion shops of the 1790s for encouraging selfish spending and for obscuring the wearer's inner nature through ephemeral fashion trends. Her portrayal of French men suggests distaste for revolutionary politics, while scrutinizing the criticism brought against fashionable women. Underlying the particulars of this satirical take on women's fashion is the irony of the presence of this article in a journal aimed specifically at women consumers because they are the most lucrative market niche. Perhaps Ehrmann might have

hoped her readers would spend their money buying more to read, than more to wear.

The reading public for *Pomona* and *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*

In her 1998 Monograph *Zwischen Häuslichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, Weckel suggests that subscription lists, published within the journal itself, allowed for a sense of community to be created between the reader and author (Weckel 319). In women's journals there are multiple possible motivations for creating such a community: the editor could write more effectively knowing her audience, the audience members improved their reputation as both well-read and as supporters of the arts, and potential customers who would look at the publication in a store might be moved to buy it based on who had already shown support for the endeavor. Carol Strauss Sotiropoulos characterizes the sense of community that *Pomona* fostered as “a forum for interactive dialogue with readers that opened a public space to private experience, authorizing women to discuss the role of learning in their lives” (213). It is the gesture of insisting that private experience be part of public discourse that was so inspiring to many women writers. Critics of women's education claimed that reading and writing separated women from their domestic duties. LaRoche proposed a model in which women could not only benefit from education, but discuss with others through the printed word the intersections between what they read and their daily lives, questioning and undermining the rigid division of public from private.

Sotiropoulos considers how these messages are distributed across the various narrative voices within *Pomona*—La Roche's presumed voice as extra-diegetic editor and narrator, then the voice of Pomona, the direct correspondent and motherly sage to Lina, and finally other narrators within short stories within the journal. By playing these voices off one another, La Roche opens up space for dialog, a space that presumably leaves room for the readers' voices, as well, both in letters to Pomona and in conversation with one another. Scholars such as Reihnhard Wittmann and Ulrike Weckel have suggested that this contributed to the sense that women's reading of journals was a form of long-distance sentimental friendship (Wittmann, "Subskribenten"). Wittmann considered the ways in which women in particular understood subscription to an author as a first step to a symbolic, Sentimental friendship with the author. La Roche evinces this concept, fostering similar relationships in an early volume of *Pomona* by encouraging her readers to write and at least tell her where they live, so she can imagine how long it takes for the new issues to be delivered to them (La Roche "An meine Leserinnen, quoted in Weckel 331).

Through both journals' reliance on subscription lists, we can recreate to a degree the intended, or at least predicted, readership. Naturally the description of subscribers is not identical with the readers of the journal themselves, but they provide a productive starting point for considering the historical audience addressed in the journal. At times there is a sense of tension between the recorded subscribers and the audience anticipated and described by the narrators of the pieces themselves. Both *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* and *Pomona* were well received

by the upper nobility. *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* had more noble subscribers than *Pomona* — seventy-one in all, the most of any women's journal considered in Weckel's study (Weckel 331). While *Pomona* did not have the same quantity of noble patrons, the subscribers were generally of a higher social rank: not counting the (most likely symbolic) 500 copies ordered by Catherine the Great of Russia, 48 copies were sent to the highest echelons of European royalty, including the queen of England, the Danish queen and her daughter, the queen of Naples, the Archduchess of Austria and the Duchess and Mother Duchess of Saxony-Weimar (Weckel 331-2). Women of the nobility often subscribed under their own name, in line with their degree of freedom and authority as part of their social standing. These striking names aside, by far the most numerous group was that of the growing *Bildungsbürgertum*: civil servants and their female relatives. Since Ehrmann and La Roche were part of this social stratum, subscriptions often began via personal connections, then through a broader interest in the project itself. It was generally considered unusual for a bourgeois woman to be listed as the subscriber to a new publication, yet for both journals, an unusually high number of bourgeois women subscribed under their own name (Weckel 342-43). The subscription lists demonstrate how successful both authors were in marketing their journals to a specifically female readership. Subscribers of the journal supported at a minimum the fact that there were some kinds of reading that were beneficial to women, to the point that it was acceptable to be publicly recognized as a subscriber.

Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann used journals and essayistic writing to broaden the expectations for women authors of the day. Although the

essays they wrote were just a small part of their literary work, they have particular significance for the way they helped position each author in the literary public sphere. By publishing under their own names, La Roche and Ehrmann served as an example that women could publish their own opinions and reflections as signed authors, in an age when women were often still reluctant to let their name be published as a subscriber to a journal. The topics La Roche and Ehrmann chose for their essays reflects the broad education they hoped women would pursue. The different tone that each author used to address her audience shows that there was more than one way to perform the role of public female author, and that women did take advantage of the opportunities they had to express their preferences and opinions in tone as well as subject.

Sophie von La Roche seems to be writing with the anticipation of women's role in the domestic realm being respected as equally important to the public role of men in society. In this view, the home would be an ideal balance, a husband and wife would support one another in their duties, a wide range of topics would come up in conversation, and everyone would benefit from broad interests and cultivation. While women do not transgress the bounds of the domestic, in this case, the strict division between spheres falls away. Knowing about what happens in the public sphere improves the domestic one, and vice versa. The division between public and private is one that corresponds to where one is physically present: women stay in the home and oversee the work done there, and men occupy the parts of the home open to the public, representing the family in public (at a market or court) if necessary, but knowledge flows between the two spaces uninterrupted. La Roche's

assumption that women will stay in the home (at least in her writing in *Pomona*) is strong enough that it is never questioned, but the possibilities of the home expand to incorporate concerns about the entire world.⁹¹ For La Roche there is a public sphere from which women are excluded in physical presence, but in an ideal world, perhaps a world yet to be attained, women's concerns are spoken in that public realm in as far as the connections between public and private is explicit. The Enlightenment ideal that La Roche hopes for would not challenge the distinction between public and private, but would call for equality between them both.

When thinking about the possibility of multiple public spheres, however, Corinna Heipcke's considerations of *Pomona's* inclusion of other authors is enlightening. Weckel had already established that the number of women contributors exceeded the number of men and included poems, travel reports, and letters from up and coming authors such as Sophie Albrecht, Philippine Engelhard, Friederike Jerusalem, Juliana von Mudersbach, Elisa von der Recke, Caroline von Wolzogen, possibly Marie Katherine von Grävemeier and Wilhelmine Gersdorf and Luise von Göchhausen (Weckel 243-244). Weckel's assertion that in this way, *Pomona* was supporting new and undiscovered authors, is expanded on by Heipcke's suggestion that La Roche's journal served as a public forum for women authors in Germany to exchange ideas with one another. La Roche includes letters from women who are more critical of women's place in society than she is, and in this way opens up a public space within the journal for a variety of women's points

⁹¹ La Roche does challenge the notion that women were exclusively suited for being wives and mothers in her other writing: *Die Geschichte des Fräulein von Sternheim* depicts being an educator or rejecting marriage as valid options. (See Dawson 107)

of view. See for example “Ein Brief zum vergleichen” by “G. geb. H.” in *Pomona*, 4.2 (1784) 377-380, in which a female reader (probably Marie Katherine von Grävemeier) responds to a male author (Gotthold Friedrich Stäudlin) to vehemently defend women against his accusations they are “naturally” less intelligent than men. (Weckel 243 note 82).

La Roche compares the state of the public and private in Germany with that of other countries, particularly England. La Roche’s interest in England is apparent in the issue of *Pomona* dedicated to that country, in the frequent setting of her novels and short stories there, and in her travels there in 1786. Perhaps the most explicit reference to the workings of a political public sphere occurs in her annotations to Thomson’s *Seasons*. La Roche’s translations from the English were accompanied by extensive annotations, although, since the annotations are printed on the top half of the page, the translated lyrical text appears to be a footnote to La Roche’s commentary, rather than the other way around. In the first translation, La Roche feels the poem requires an explanation of the English Parliament, and how pleased she was to hear that in England, women often attend parliamentary debates, listening and encouraging the speakers they agree with (“Ein Winterabend aus Thomson” 1.1 (1783) 65). While the privilege of watching men govern seems like a minor step towards women’s participation in political events, it does reveal a desire for greater permeability between the public and the private. Of course, when women did sit in the balconies and listen to the first German parliament in 1848, they were widely ridiculed for crossing into “public” territory (Joeres 20-21). La Roche’s annotations, like her essays, were a way for her to expand what was

deemed “acceptable” topics for women, including political topics, and could be seen as part of why these poems came to have a contested place within the journal (see Heipcke 85-88, Weckel 410-418). La Roche stopped publishing excerpts from Thomson on the advice of male readers, much to female reader’s disappointment, expressed in letters in later issues. Weckel suggests that this conflict created a “confederation” between the readers and La Roche, to the point of generating a “female public” among her readers (Weckel 417). Whether in imagining a household equanimously positioned between public and private, or in creating a competing public of women authors, La Roche’s conceptions of social structures are more optimistic than those of later authors.

Conventional conceptions of public or private spheres were largely upheld in Marianne Ehrmann’s journals *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* and the *Einsiedlerin aus den Alpen*. For all that she followed La Roches’s model of a monthly women’s journal, Marianne Ehrmann is less interested in establishing a competing public in which women could participate. In fact, Weckel has revealed that the dominant rhetoric in *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* deplores how much women have penetrated the public sphere, encouraging men to intimidate women to remain in the domestic realm with “thunderous voices” (Weckel 464). Overall, Ehrmann, more than La Roche, supports the necessity of separate spheres for men and women, without suggesting any parity in the significance between the two (Weckel 465). In her later journal, Ehrmann specifically criticizes political activity of any kind on the part of women, drawing on negative examples such as Charlotte Corday in revolutionary France as examples of unnatural behavior (Weckel 467). Further supporting the

position that women should not transgress the strict delineation of the private realm is the fact that no additional female authors are included in *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*, and as such, it did not serve as a competing public sphere for women authors.

I am inclined to agree with Heipcke, and consider the possibility that this exclusion of women from the ranks of contributors has more to do with Ehrmann's relative lack of connections at the beginning of her first journalistic endeavor. Speaking for this perspective is the fact that her second journal, *Einsiedlerin aus den Alpen*, does contain texts from women authors (Heipcke 100-101).

Weckel's interpretation of Ehrmann's views on public actions for women also seem to take a narrow view when considering the wider corpus of Ehrmann's writing, which has arguably been labeled "proto-feminist" (Dawson 221). The fact that Ehrmann gives an "inaugural address" at the start of the journal certainly toys with the relative publicity and acceptability of women's editing and writing at that time. Later issues of the journal, which contain the most reactionary passages attributed to Ehrmann mentioned above, were also under constant scrutiny by the publisher, J.G. Cotta, whose conservative tastes clashed with the Ehrmanns at multiple occasions. Taking Marianne Ehrmann's expressions of disgust at the French revolutionaries can be attributed in part to a growing German nationalist sentiment, opposed to French influence in any way, felt in many articles. Weckel leaves little room in her analysis for interpreting any passages of Ehrmann's professed use of satire. Weckel cites the passage from an essay in *Einsiedlerin aus den Alpen* which criticized women engaged for and against the revolution in France: "Denn ein Weib,

das einmal über ihre Sphäre hinausgesprungen ist, wenn sie nicht schnell wieder zurück tritt, kennt keine Gesezze, keine Schranken mehr!" (466-467).⁹² Weckel reads this sentence as evidence that Ehrmann considered French women who engaged in any political activity morally depraved. It would lend itself equally well to an affirmation that, indeed, the limitations put on women can be lifted, and artificially imposed barriers to entry can be crossed. That crossing produces subversive knowledge of an individual's independence that cannot be erased. This is very much in line with the contradictory or ambivalent attitude often portrayed by early women authors. Ehrmann extols in many texts the model of the woman thinker, as opposed to a woman scholar. This woman thinker will be able to discern, through exercising her reason and education, the most appropriate place for her in society and not be swayed by the opinions of others. It seems fair to assume that Ehrmann expected her readers to employ this same reasoning when reading the essays she wrote, as well, when navigating the ambiguities of women's public voice at the turn of the eighteenth century.

In Summary

In concluding this chapter, I want to recall its title: imagined networks. I would like to emphasize both words to draw out the full implications of "imagined" and "networks," whereby one should automatically think of Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities." While Anderson coined the phrase to explain a political

⁹² "Because a woman who has sprung once out of her sphere, if she does not step quickly back into it, no longer knows any laws, or any limitations!"

and national phenomenon, I use it to speak about the communion of minds that La Roche and Ehrmann envisioned. Even as the citizens of a state cannot possibly know every fellow citizen but only imagine shared values and interests, so too did our women essayists project and thereby create a fellowship of like-mindedness via their journalistic and writing activities (Anderson 224). (cf. , p.224). “Imagined” and “networks” are, therefore, inherently related to changes in the public sphere 1770-1830.

La Roche and Ehrmann were pioneers in the literary landscape at a time when many conventions of authorship and publication were still being renegotiated. La Roche relied on the strength of an imagined connection with her readers that emulated conventional social relationships. While La Roche begins with the relationship between a mother and her daughter to justify her experiment with being an editor and to guarantee its success, the particular and personal relationship evolves into connections with a community of shared values. For instance, La Roche referred to the protagonist of her first novel as her “paper daughter.” The readers of her journal morph into so many more paper daughters until they eventually form a family of related spirits. Thus the question of success or failure of *Pomona* is not to be measured solely in terms of the economic loss that La Roche eventually incurred in publishing the journal. The experiment was not a total loss. Given the groundbreaking nature of the publication itself, its success should be judged by the kinds of journals and writing that followed in its wake.

Amaliens Erholungsstunden is one such example. Ehrmann imagined herself as one of La Roche’s “paper daughters” come to life in her choice to adopt Sternheim

as a stage name. She continued to perform this role even as she edited a journal that can be seen as a successor in many ways to *Pomona*, as has been argued above. Both authors insisted they could take part in the literary public sphere as women, addressing women often on topics that were characterized as femininely appropriate. As we will see in the following chapter, later authors benefitted from the professional acceptance for which these early women authors struggled, even as they began to experiment with non-feminine topics. The enhanced professionalization of later women writers presented, as we shall see, new challenges to conventions of authorship, gender, and publicity.

CHAPTER V

ACTUAL NETWORKS: FROM PERSONAL TO PROFESSIONAL

The literary public sphere changed in significant ways in the 20 years after the publication of *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. In the 1790s, many authors were entering the market for the first time by publishing their own writing in start-up journals. Historically powerful publishers were scrambling to meet the demand of an increasing reading public. After an interval of scarcity brought on by the Napoleonic wars, the literary market at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not as resilient as before. Established publishers who had weathered the economic storms and come out ahead were interested in satisfying the still increasing demand for varied reading material by choosing authors who conformed to established literary models that had proved economically viable. Authors had narrower constraints within which they could fulfill their literary ambitions when compared to the experimental tenor of the last decades of the eighteenth century. This was particularly true of women. It became more important than ever to work within the constraints and expectations of readers and publishers. By comparing and contrasting the efforts of two women authors in particular, Therese Huber and Caroline Pichler, I seek to reveal the patterns of access to the literary marketplace available to women in a period of reconstruction.

In historically turbulent times, both women used the limited opportunities available to them to establish a successful literary career as novelist and short story writer. Additionally, each invested a great deal of literary energy into composing essays. Although they never met, their professional lives were intertwined in

Huber's role as editor of the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, to which Pichler contributed and for which she solicited new authors. Both saw their writing within the broad context of literature as an educational project to improve society. Both had the chance to learn from some of the best minds in their communities: Therese Huber through her connections as the daughter of a professor in Göttingen; Caroline Pichler through her mother's salon in Vienna, a tradition she continued in her own home. Their correspondence reveals the porous nature of any division between public and private, as well as the importance of networking with successful authors male and female.

At first glance the essays both women published seem to adhere to a conservative world view, although recent scholarship has uncovered the ways in which each participated in what Sigrid Weigel called the "schielender Blick" (cross-eyed gaze) to abide by the constraints of society, while simultaneously critiquing those constraints (104). Openly professing an overwhelming dedication to home and hearth, each nonetheless led professional literary lives.⁹³ Lucia Lauková refers to Pichler as the "emancipated opponent of emancipation." Each repeatedly insists in letters, forewords, and essays that she is first and foremost mother and wife, author second. For example, Huber begins her essay, "Ueber die Ansprache des weiblichen Geschlechtes zu höherer Geisteskultur" with the remark: "Ich ergreife mit Schüchternheit diesen öffentlichen Weg, mit Euch, liebe Schwestern, zu

⁹³ For a detailed discussion of the power of social expectations on women authors in this period see Ruth-Ellen B. Joeres, *Respectability and Deviance*.

sprechen" (150-151).⁹⁴ In Huber's case, a woman speaks as a woman to other women in a medium that is possibly inappropriate, because it occurs in a public venue and therefore not ladylike. In spite of these concerns, Huber presents her opinion, based on her personal experience, to the scrutiny of a public audience. Similarly, in her essay "Über die Bildung des weiblichen Geschlechtes" (1810), Pichler insists that she knows from experience that women can run a household and still have time for other activities (294-95). Both authors appeal to experience as a form of authority in writing an essay. These and other essays will be read for indications that Pichler and Huber used essays to participate in debates in the literary public sphere in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Finally, I will consider Pichler and Huber's roles as editors. The choices each made in respect to the publishing of their essays reveals the growing acceptance of the essay as a literary form at this time. Both authors regularly wrote essays for popular journals, and most of the essays considered in this chapter were originally contributions to the *Morgenblatt*. Both were so popular that their texts were reprinted in collected volumes. Huber's novels and short stories were reprinted, but her essays remained only in journals. Pichler, on the other hand, succeeded in publishing her collected works during her lifetime. *Prosaische Aufsätze* (Prose Essays) were always part of these collected works, and in some cases were issued in multiple printings. This indicates that for Pichler, at least, essays belonged to a literary oeuvre along side short stories, novels, and poems. By comparing Huber's and Pichler's use of essays in the literary marketplace, I can shed light on a less

⁹⁴ "On the Claim of the Female Sex to Higher Intellectual Culture" / "I take up timidly this public way of speaking with you, dear sisters"

studied avenue of access for women to the literary public sphere, especially in the years leading up to and immediately following the Congress of Vienna.

Personal Introductions to Public Personas

Therese Huber had access to the literary public sphere over the course of her life through her father and two husbands. She was born in 1764 in Göttingen, where her father, Christian Gottlob Heyne was a noted professor of classical philology at the university. Growing up in an academic environment, she had many opportunities to read broadly and discuss what she had read with others. In 1785 she married Georg Forster, and moved with him to Vilnius, at that time a part of Poland. Two years later the couple moved to Mainz, where Forster had a position as head librarian at the University of Mainz. When the French revolutionary army occupied Mainz at the end of 1792, Forster joined a Jacobin club and helped establish the first republic on German soil. When Prussian and Austrian troops reclaimed the city in the summer of 1793, Therese fled with Ludwig Ferdinand Huber and her children to Neuchâtel in Switzerland, while Forster remained in Paris, where he had been representing Mainz to the General Assembly. Georg Forster died in 1794 and Therese married Ludwig Ferdinand Huber in the same year. In 1798 the Hubers moved to Tübingen and then on to Stuttgart, where Ludwig was employed as editor of Cotta's *Allgemeine Zeitung*. Therese and Ludwig collaborated on many pieces, and Therese was involved with the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Literatur* from its inception. She published her first short story *Abentheuer*

auf einer Reise nach Neu-Holland anonymously in 1793 in Cotta's journal *Flora*, the immediate follow-up to Cotta's collaboration with the Ehrmanns on *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*. Ludwig Ferdinand Huber died in 1804, but Therese continued to work closely with Cotta and contribute serialized stories and essays to his journals. In 1816 Cotta extended an offer for Therese to take on editorial duties at the *Morgenblatt*, an opportunity that suited her experience quite well.

Being related to influential scholars and authors and editors did not, however, make Therese Huber's path to publishing particularly smooth. Huber was best known for her fictional writing. She tried to keep her name out of print for the first two decades of her career. Later she published under the name of her husband, Ludwig Huber, out of deference to her father's wishes (A. Hahn 79-81). She and Ludwig Huber both contributed to volumes of stories that were published only under his name. After Ludwig's death in 1804, Therese Huber continued to write stories, but said they were from her husband's *Nachlass* (literary estate). To be sure, in 1811 she published her travel journal, *Bemerkungen über Holland aus dem Reisejournal einer deutschen Frau* (*Notes on Holland from the Travel Journal of a German Woman*), under her own name. In all likelihood, she felt the many references to friends and family would betray her identity as author, even if her name were not listed on the title page. Hence, she appended her name to the travel diary. However, after her father's death in 1812, she began to modify her practice of publishing her work as if it were from her late husband's *Nachlass*. For example, she added her own name as co-author to the 1819 title of her collected writings: *L.F. Hubers gesammelte Erzählungen, fortgesetzt von Therese Huber, geb. Heyne* (*L.F. Hubers Collected Stories*,

continued by Therese Huber, nee Heyne).

In letters to friends and acquaintances, Huber justified her claims to pseudonymity as an appeal to expectations of women not to publish or seek a professional career outside the home. In an 1805 letter to Johann Gotthard von Reinhold, she suggested that by remaining anonymous, it was easier for her to be liked by other women (Huber to Reinhold 142). The times in their correspondence that Pichler mentions how pleased she was to see Huber's name in print, Huber insists that the step was taken against her will (29 Jan. 1827, Leuschner 137). Even after publishing under her own name, she did not unequivocally encourage women to follow in her footsteps. For example Elisa von Löffelholz wrote Huber for advice on how to be successful as an author. Huber replied Löffelholz in 1822:

Sehen Sie, werthe Frau, daß ich den Pfad, den Sie gehen wollen, wohl kenne —ich betrat ihn vor 27 Jahren zuerst — ich ward stets nachsichtig behandelt, und doch, werthe Frau, halte ich es für höchst peinlich, höchst unwohlthätig, Schriftstellerin zu sein — halte es für eine unsre Geschlechtsverhältnisse zerstörende Laufbahn, sich durch Schriftstellerei Geld zu verdienen.⁹⁵

Huber's discouraging remarks arise from an understanding that a woman earning money from her writing is harmful for the way men and women relate to one another. Huber even admits that she was treated evenhandedly, that is, that her path as an author was relatively smooth, but recommends against other women making the same choice. This exchange is strong evidence in favor of the relevance

⁹⁵ „You see, worthy Madam, that I know very well the path that you wish to go — I first started on it 27 years ago — I was always treated leniently, and yet, worthy madam, I consider it most embarrassing, most unbeneficial, to become a woman author — I consider a career earning money as a writer one that destroys our gender roles" (Therese Huber an Elise von Löffelholz 10. April 1822. Andrea Hahn 178).

of “ambivalence” for Huber. Clearly, Huber internalized the cultural convention for women to project a persona that centered on domesticity and rejected professional pursuits.

Caroline Pichler's date of birth and death are almost exact bookends of the dates defining this study. Born in 1769 in Vienna, she died in 1843 without having spent very much time outside of the city. Pichler's life was marked by the political upheavals that affected the turbulent decades before and after 1800. Pichler inherited much of the acceptance of women as authors for which earlier women such as Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann had struggled. But she still faced cultural conventions that equated women's pursuits beyond domestic life, including writing, with a neglect of social responsibilities and femininity. Pichler countered these uncertainties by developing a strong public writing voice that creatively resisted social limitations on women writers. Evidence for this position between societal expectations and her own position is evident in the following passage from a letter to Therese Huber: "Ich erscheine in Gesellschaft wie jede andere ordentliche Hausfrau, ja ich *will* nicht anders erscheinen, denn ich denke an meinen *Seneca*: Frons nostra populo conveniat, intus dissideamus und stelle mich gern von außen allen Übrigen gleich (11 Dec 1819, Leuschner 44)⁹⁶." In this self-representation, despite assertions to the contrary, Pichler belies just how unlike "every other housewife" she is — both in that she is an author of novels, and that she can quote Seneca, in Latin, a language primarily reserved for male students. All

⁹⁶. "I appear in society like every other reputable housewife, indeed, I do not *want* to appear otherwise, because I think of my *Seneca*: [our appearance may match the people, inside everything may be completely different.] and gladly appear to be the same as everyone else externally."

of the authors considered in this study were professional in their attitudes, yet none included their essays as a central part of their literary persona like Caroline Pichler did in collecting and republishing them. Her essayistic writing tends to acknowledge that there are subjects about which women are not expected to write, and then proceeds to write about what she chooses, positioning herself alongside male as well as female authors of her day.

Caroline Pichler's sense of the "public" was shaped by the close connections her family, particularly her mother, had to the imperial court in Vienna. Caroline's youth was saturated with the possibilities of "enlightened absolutism." The high point of the Austrian Enlightenment dated from Maria Theresia's death in 1780 (when Caroline was 11 years old) to the conservative backlash in the wake of the terror in France, around 1795. In the subsequent years, which saw the occupation of Vienna by Napoleon in 1805, later the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815, and the ensuing re-establishment of the monarchies of Europe, Caroline and her family rarely left Vienna, navigating the currents of political change as best they could.⁹⁷ Pichler's mother Christine Hieronymous had been a *Vorleserin* for Empress Maria Theresia before she married Hofrat Franz von Greiner, and was still well connected to court in her married life. Pichler's early intellectual development benefitted from lessons in literature and languages from the poet Lorenz Leopold Haschka and music lessons from Mozart and Haydn (Jordan 411). Caroline grew up in the ambience of her mother's salon, which was a well-recognized seat of Enlightenment thought in Vienna. Caroline kept up the tradition of a salon as her mother had done,

⁹⁷ For more detailed biographical references, see Leuschner, Krill, and Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten*.

and over the decades hosted among other guests literary figures such as Friedrich and Dorothea Schlegel, Zacharias Werner, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Franz Grillparzer, and Joseph von Hormayr, and political figures from censor Joseph Köderl (whose obituary Pichler included in her *Prosaische Aufsätze*), to Metternich himself (Krill). Salons, although often studied through documents that were written to create an idealized image of a social gathering (Hahn, "Mythos" 226), are an excellent example of the difficulties presented by post-hoc definitions of separations between the public and private sphere. Held in the home with the woman of the house playing a central role, they arguably represent events relegated to the private domain. Yet their importance for the formation of emerging "public opinion" is not to be underestimated. Caroline's experience in Viennese *salons* certainly contributed to her confidence approaching her audience of readers.

Looking back on her life, Pichler remembers essayistic prose as her first attempt to write for a specific, critical audience, rather than for her own enjoyment. As a young woman, Pichler shared the same lessons in reading, writing, and languages with her brother, but at a certain point, she was no longer given formal instruction, since she would never attend university. In the early 1790s, her brother and his friends formed a reading group, popular at the time, in which members also wrote short essays on one of the philosophical or political readings. The essays would be read aloud and then critiqued by the other members of the group (Pichler, *Überblick meines Lebens*, 199). Although Pichler was interested in participating in the group, she tried to follow conventions limiting women's full participation as public writers. She wrote essays that were on "appropriate" topics ("Gegenstände,

die nicht außer meiner Sphäre lag"/ "*Topics that were not outside of my sphere*"), and she did not present the essays herself, but rather gave them to her brother, who shared them anonymously with his group of friends (Pichler, *Überblick*, 199). Pichler credits these exercises with preparing her for a writing career (her "schriftstellerische Ausbildung,"/ "Authorial Apprenticeship"). She learned not just how to organize her thoughts, but also how to adapt her writing to socially appropriate venues (199).

Through this group Caroline eventually met her husband, Andreas Pichler, who proved to be very supportive of her writing career. As a married woman, more possibilities for Pichler to publish in a variety of genres were available. Although she first published a poem in the "Wienerisches Musenalmanach auf das Jahr 1782," ("Viennese Muse's Almanac for the Year 1782") she kept most of her writing to herself until explicitly encouraged by her husband to publish her *Gleichnisse* (Parables) in 1800. Pichler attributes her first forays into drama also to her husband's encouragement (although the inspiration for her subsequent nine plays was entirely her own.) Her novels, especially *Agathokles* (1808), an epistolary novel written in response to C. M. Wieland's *Agathon*, were widely reviewed and read in elite literary circles. Although ostensibly never seeking publication without the express encouragement of her husband, she regularly connected her writing back to her mother's name and salon by publishing as "Caroline Pichler geb. von Greiner." In her brother-in-law Anton Pichler, Caroline found her main publisher, for he ran a well respected and successful publishing house in Vienna (Lebensaft "Pichler, Anton", 412). After his death, Pichler's sister-in-law Elisabeth Pichler

continued to conduct the family business. Caroline's works were published under Elisabeth's supervision with the imprint "A. Pichler's sel. Wwe. (Lebensaft "Pichler, Elisabeth" 412-3)." In this sense, Pichler had relatively easy access to a publisher to support her work, a clear advantage in pursuing a career as professional author.

Caroline Pichler wrote extensively for literary and cultural journals of the day, as evidenced in her correspondence with Therese Huber in regards to the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*. Not only did Pichler submit articles and stories of her own for publication there, but also encouraged other Viennese writers and journalists to send Huber their work. Pichler penned many reviews and short pieces for various journals and annuals of the day, including *Minerva*, *Der Telegraph*, *Deutsches Museum*, *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, *Taschenbuch für Vaterländische Geschichte*, *Urania*, *Aglaja*, *Huldigung den Frauen* among others (Kadrnoska 56).

Later in life, Pichler maintained contact with group of women writer friends, all of whom supported one another and other fledgling authors, most notable among them, Franz Grillparzer. From 1814-1829, Pichler spent part of each summer at the Hungarian estate of Marie Gräfin von Zay, together with Therese von Artner and Marianne von Neumann-Meissenthal. The women shared their work with one another, soliciting feedback and obtaining support for their work. Pichler usually travelled there by herself, as did the other women, and does not report on being criticized by her husband for wanting to leave her family for weeks at a time to focus on her writing (Kord, "Und Drinnen" 144). These outings were Pichler's most regular travel away from home, to which she otherwise kept closely. The fact that Pichler rarely left Vienna, but Therese Huber was forced to move between many

cities over the course of her life, became a repeated topic of comparison between Huber and Pichler in their correspondence. Pichler remembers these summers fondly and over time mourns the passing of each of these women writers in *Nachrufe* she penned for them.⁹⁸ Pichler's obituaries praised the writing of these women (with clear bibliographic information, in case the reader is inspired to order a copy of their publications), but also make a point of emphasizing how feminine the authors were, in that they always fulfilled their duties as wives and mothers, and never challenged their place in society. As Anke Gilleir points out, this integration of an artistic life with a conventional, domestic one in Pichler's depiction of her own life and that of her friends can be read as resistance to the isolated *Genie*-ideal that was becoming established as the ideal of any true (male) artist ("Was wollte" 187). In spite of her prominence in life, in later decades and centuries Pichler was most often remembered as the host of a prominent Viennese salon whose memoirs provide a glimpse into the literary upper crust of the first decades of the nineteenth century. The texts she authored have only recently begun to be thoroughly investigated.

Networking Between Public and Private

During the early nineteenth century, as now, professional networks were key to the success of individual authors. These networks often challenge strict

⁹⁸. "Therese von Artner," *Zerstreute Blätter* (1836) "Marianne v. Neumann-Meissenthal, geborene v. Tiell," *Zeitbilder* (1839) "Der Tod der Frau Pauline v. Schmerling", "Marie Gräfin von Zay," *Zerstreute Blätter. Neue Folge* (1845)

separations between the public and the private. In the last chapter, I suggested that Marianne Ehrmann drew connections between her work and that of La Roche, yet no closer professional network was established between the two. Family members or close friends, such as Wieland for La Roche or Theophil for Marianne Ehrmann, were central nodes in each of these author's networks. In this way, relationships that would often be designated as constitutive of a domestic sphere were crucial to the contributions these authors made as part of a public sphere. While domestic relationships still played a significant role for Huber and Pichler, as evident in the biographical sketches above, these authors were writing at a time in which it was easier to establish professional connections to other women authors. Sometimes these professional networks resulted in friendships, as was the case for Huber and Pichler. These relationships are evidence for the necessity of adjusting conceptions of public and private to allow for overlap and intersection.

Scholarship on Therese Huber and Caroline Pichler has been greatly enriched by Brigitte Leuschner's edition of 44 letters between the two women⁹⁹. By the time these letters were exchanged, Pichler and Huber were both well-established authors. Their correspondence vacillates between detailed knowledge about publishing their writing and personal information about their families.¹⁰⁰ Huber initially approached Pichler in search of a correspondent in Vienna for *Das*

⁹⁹. Scholarship on Therese Huber has benefitted immensely from the edition of her complete letters, edited by Magdalene Heuser.

¹⁰⁰. See for example Pichler's letter from December 20, 1825, where she estimates from the length of a manuscript how many Octave format pages would be filled, but admits she's not as confident estimating how many columns in the *Morgenblatt* that would be (125), but then goes on to respond to Huber's account of her experience of the French Revolution (126) and recount what she knows personally about Helmina von Chezy's sons (127).

Morgenblatt. Pichler tells of her attempts to find a suitable collaborator who is available for the task (Letters 1-10). Later letters refer to their current projects, and as their friendship strengthens they begin reflect on their experiences as women authors. I have read these letters for reflections by both authors on their conception of a literary public sphere. Two themes that emerged from these letters are: the challenge of writing under censorship and their target audience.

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, censorship had increasingly moved from the domain of the church to the bureaucracy of the states and territories, and as such, varied region to region while generally moving in accordance with shifting political tides. Living in different cities and states, Pichler and Huber had to write with different censors in mind. The 1780s broadly speaking experienced a loosening of censorship that was tightened again in response to the French Revolution (Bodi 48-49, Breuer 86-93, Plachta 54-83). Napoleon's reign over German speaking territories between 1806 and 1814 brought less censorship of literary or scientific texts (Heady 5), and a centralization of censorship practices (Breuer 147-148). Generally speaking, the censorship in Austria was stricter than in Württemberg, but Cotta still had to be circumspect about what he chose to publish in the *Morgenblatt* in Stuttgart. In spite of the fact that the Congress of Vienna ostensibly guaranteed provisions for freedom of the press, in practice the strict Austrian censor stayed in place, and Württemberg codified a limited freedom of the press in 1817 (Breuer 152). In 1819, the Carlsbad Decrees were established, in which all journals, newspapers, and books less than 20 sheets of paper (about 320 book pages) were subject to pre- and post-publication censorship (Breuer 153).

Originally written to be in effect for five years, the law was renewed indefinitely in 1824, and was in effect until 1848 (Breuer 153-4). One of the most striking changes in the passing of these decrees was that, for the first time, all German territories adhered to the same censorship practices, leaving no “haven” for heretical writers as there had been in the past (Heady 11). Huber and Pichler mention censorship explicitly in multiple letters written after the Carlsbad Decrees were in effect.

Pichler mentions the censor first as a means of apology to Huber, and the fact that Pichler has not read Huber’s novel *Hannah*: “Ihre Hannah kenne ich nicht, wir hier in Wien, hinter der chinesischen Mauer, zwischen welcher sich nur selten ein besseres Buch durchstiehlt... wir kennen gar manches nicht.” (11 Feb. 1822, 87).¹⁰¹ In this case, Pichler is referring to the censor’s practice of limiting what reading material could enter Austria. Her reference to living behind a “Chinese wall,” suggests an insurmountable barrier against unwanted foreign elements. Pichler’s critique is evident in the fact that it is the *better* books that are seen as dangerous enough to be withheld from the Viennese. Later in the same letter, she refers to her own internalization of censorship: “Ich hätte gern einen Liberalen (in reinem Sinn) unserer Zeit, eine Art *Narr des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (wenn Sie *Zschokkes* Erzählung im *Rheinischen Taschenbuch* kennen) geschildert. Das dürfte ich in Österreich nicht” (88).¹⁰² This quotation demonstrates that Pichler chose to not write about characters that she would like to in order to avoid confrontation with

¹⁰¹ “I don’t know your Hannah, we here in Vienna, behind the Chinese wall, which only rarely lets a better book steal though... there is much we do not know.”

¹⁰² “I would have liked to have portrayed a Liberal (in a pure sense) of our times, a *fool of the nineteenth century* (if you know *Zschokkes* story in the *Rheinischen Taschenbuch*). I would not be allowed to do that in Austria.”

the Austrian censors. However, she reveals a detailed awareness of what is and is not acceptable. Pichler even admits to toying with emigration in order to enjoy more freedom of expression (29 and 30 Oct. 1822, 98). Pichler's concern with being able to express her opinion publicly is certainly in line with other professional authors of the day.

Living in the relatively more open territory of Württemberg, Therese Huber does not have occasion to complain about being censored to the same degree as Pichler, but the publication of her writing also depends on the censor's permission. Cotta often used the anticipated reaction from a censor to justify changing editorial decisions Huber had made in the *Morgenblatt* (A. Hahn and B. Fischer 79). In a letter from 1825 Huber responds to Pichler's inquiry after a story Huber had written: "ich halte sie für anziehend, weil ich Erlebtes mit glühenden Herzen und selbstbewußter Einsicht schrieb" (11 Dec. 1825 123).¹⁰³ Huber does not categorically reject writing on a subject that will bring her under scrutiny of the censor, as Pichler admits to doing. As a justification Huber points out that she is drawing on material from her time in Poland, when she lived there as Georg Forster's wife in the 1780s. While Pichler abstains from creating a fictional character that would represent a liberal (and therefore suspect) point of view, Huber draws on the authority of her experience. She does not invent a possibility, rather she reports on what did, in fact, happen. A combination of more lenient political circumstances and her own experience helped Huber develop a more independent attitude than Pichler. This difference becomes clear when considering their reactions to censorship. Although

¹⁰³ "I find it compelling, because I wrote about what I had experienced with a burning heart and self-confident insight."

experience remains a central theme in each author's essays, we would be amiss to ignore the effect that censorship had on Huber and Pichler's ability to recount that experience.

In addition to censorship, Pichler and Huber also speak of their intended audience. For women writing as a means of supporting their family, anticipating what their audience would purchase was of the utmost importance. Most of their comments, however, focus on their desire to see literature used in an educational endeavor. As will become evident in the following analysis of sample essays, Pichler and Huber wrote for women to supplement the limited education that girls received. Unlike La Roche and Ehrmann, who focused on journals aimed at women readers, Huber and Pichler published their essays in journals published for the general reader, male and female. In the text of the essays themselves, they refer to their female readers, sometimes implying that the male subscribers of the journal might glance over contributions written by women, or that the men reading will know much about the subject already.

Their letters reject scholarly writing as too abstract or challenging for the general public. Therese Huber criticized scholarly men because "ihre profunde Gründlichkeit macht sie unwirksam für die Menge" (January 1829, 147).¹⁰⁴ Later in the same letter, Huber bemoans the lack of new novels she could share with her cook. This suggests that Huber was aware of the growing demand for reading material not just in the upper middle class, but in the lower middle and working class as well. Similarly, Pichler criticizes contemporary authors for being too

¹⁰⁴ "Their profound thoroughness makes them ineffective for the masses."

abstract, and she compares their writing to algebra. In her remark, "welche Hausfrau könnte ihre Wirthschaft mit Algebra führen?" (6 December 1825 121),¹⁰⁵ Pichler reveals that her intention is to write to the *Hausfrau*. This reader is interested in learning more than the best way to run her household, but benefits most when what she reads is relatable to what she already knows. This speaks to an interesting paradox: the attempt to publish, that is, make public, writing that moves almost entirely within the "private" sphere — from one female author to any number of female readers. One way of examining this tension is by considering more closely Huber's and Pichler's opinion on literature by reading their literary reviews.

The Experienced Author: Essays on Literature

Huber and Pichler both responded to other texts that inspired or challenged them by writing literary review essays, in order to position themselves vis-à-vis other contemporary authors. The literary book review, as a genre, was new and influential in the eighteenth century and informed the literary elite and the broader reading public in broader practices of critical reflection (McCarthy, "Reviewing Nation" 152). An interest in using a book review to educate a broader public to think critically on any number of subjects is certainly clear from Huber and Pichler's essays, which take the text as a starting point, and meander to related subjects. Much as Georg Lukacs mentioned in his "Brief an Leon Popper," an essayist uses another work of art as a springboard into their own reflections. Once the idea of the

¹⁰⁵ "What housewife could run her household with algebra?"

work becomes more consuming than the work itself, the essayist leaves the discussion of the work in order to focus on the discussion of the idea.¹⁰⁶ Huber and Pichler employ this technique in essays considered here, using literary works as a chance to contribute their experiences and considerations to the public debate surrounding significant literary works and authors. This is a marked difference from La Roche and Ehrmann, who referred to other authors, but rarely responded to the content of those works in elaborate detail. In each of these essays, Huber and Pichler suggest that the text in question has been more thoroughly reviewed for its aesthetic qualities elsewhere, and proceed to reflect on a point that the reading brought to light for her, and that she wants to explore in more detail. Each challenges an assumption made by an influential author, and counters the claims that the author makes by describing her personal experience. Their experience circumscribes the “space for maneuvering” in relation to other literary works.

Because of her position at the *Morgenblatt*, Huber authored many more book reviews than Pichler. A noticeable rise in book reviews attributed to Huber coincides roughly with her time as editor of the *Kunstblatt*, a sub-section of the *Morgenblatt*, in 1816.¹⁰⁷ Most of these book reviews do not exhibit essayistic

¹⁰⁶ Der Essayist spricht über ein Bild oder ein Buch, verläßt es aber sogleich — warum ? Ich glaube, weil die Idee dieses Bildes und dieses Buches übermächtig im ihm geworden ist, weil er darüber alles nebensächlich Konkrete an ihm gänzlich vergaß, es nur als Anfang, als Sprungbrett benutzte.

"The essayist speaks of a picture or a book, but leaves it again at once — why? Because, I think, the idea of the picture or book has become predominant in his mind, because he has forgotten all that is concretely incidental about it, because he has used it only as a starting point, a springboard." (Lukacs, 15-16)

¹⁰⁷ Research into Cotta's *Morgenblatt* has been aided by the comprehensive work done by Bernhard Fischer, especially the Register-Band, which indexes all contributors to each issue of the *Morgenblatt*. Fischer, Bernhard. *Morgenblatt für*

qualities. Although they share some formal qualities with Pfammatter's definition—short, non-fiction prose works with a title—they are not literary. Most of these reviews discuss almanacs and *Taschenbücher*. They are purely informational, offering a brief (sometimes only a paragraph) summary of the work's content and describing any copperplates included in the volume, so that a potential reader or buyer can make an informed decision to read or to purchase.

I am more interested in a different set of texts, which meet the criteria of essayistic writing, and begin by referencing a recent literary publication. They meet the formal considerations of length, title, named author, with literary devices and strategies that make the essay pleasing to read. Although these literary reviews begin with a title of another work, the essayist moves rapidly to other topics. This mimics the mode of critical thinking central to the form of essayistic writing, and models the connection between reading and reflecting so prized by Enlightenment thinkers. I will progress chronologically, considering first an early essay by Pichler, then a somewhat later one by Huber. Similar to the approach taken by La Roche and Ehrmann to use an "appropriate" topic such as fashion to discuss ancient Greek thinkers or current politics, Huber and Pichler use other famous texts as a means to enter much more controversial debates.

In "Über die Corinne der Frau von Stael (1807)" ("On Frau von Stael's Corinne") Pichler uses elaborate and almost contradictory justifications for choosing an essay to speak to readers of a novel by another woman author: Madame de Staël.

Gebildete Stände, Gebildete Leser, 1807-1865: Nach dem Redaktionsexemplar im Cotta-Archiv (Stiftung "Stuttgarter Zeitung"); Register der Honorarempfänger, Autoren und Kollationsprotokolle. München: Saur, 2000. Print.

De Staël's reception in Germany was enormous, due in no small part to Therese Huber's promotion of the author in letters and essays (Heuser "Therese Hubers Beitrag"). The essay was originally published in Cotta's *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* in 1807 and is one of the earliest essays to be included in her collection *Prosaische Aufsätze* (1814). In that volume it is 12 pages long, and moves from a comparison of the plots and protagonists of *Corinne* and *Delphine* to Pichler's own experience of being a woman author. Pichler's response to Staël's novel centers on the lack of positive role models for intellectually active women. Pichler suggests it is up to women authors to create female characters who are both well educated and well adjusted. In fact, her own authorship of this essay can be read as embodying the principle she advocates. The awareness of her tenuous position as a woman writer is evident in the ways Pichler uses essayistic strategies to assert her right to speak out on this book, while deflecting anticipated criticism.

Pichler begins by establishing her target audience: namely, the broad readership of the novel *Corinne*, which contains arguably most of the reading public in Germany and France (whose tastes shaped the reception of literature across Europe) (165). Because the book has already been widely reviewed, Pichler does not see commentary as a "Rezension" (Review) designed to win over more readers for the novel.¹⁰⁸ Rather, she uses the essay to share her reflections prompted by her engagement with the text with the author of the novel herself. Since we know

¹⁰⁸ "Also kein Wort von dem Buche als Buch, als Product eines glänzenden Genie's und höchsteigenthümlichen Charakters, der sich in jeder Ansicht und Bemerkung eigen und selbstständig ausspricht" (166). "Thus no work on the book as a book, as product of a brilliant genius and highly singular character, which expresses itself independently in every opinion and comment."

Pichler corresponded extensively with many authors, it is fair to assume that Pichler's choice to address De Staël via an essay is a gesture that embraces public discourse. This assumption is further undergirded by a passage that transitions from Pichler's summary of *Corinne's* fame to her own consideration of De Staël's work:

Nur als Schriftstellerin zu Schriftstellerin oder vielmehr als Frau zur Frau wünschte ich mit der Verfasserinn zu sprechen; und da das, was ich ihr zu sagen habe, mein ganzes Geschlecht betrifft, das so viel Recht hat, auf sie stolz zu seyn, so erlaube ich mir, es öffentlich und unter meinem Nahmen zu sagen. Von jeher waren mir anonyme Recensionen zuwider. (166)¹⁰⁹

Initially characterizing her reflections on the novel as just one female author speaking to another, Pichler broadens her scope to include a tête a tête "als Frau zu Frau." This move de-emphasizes the ambition in characterizing herself as an author, which hints at an appeal to the very social conventions that Staël decries in her novel. Ironically, it also dates Pichler's self awareness as an accomplished author to at least 1807, one year before *Agathokles*, her most famous work, was published. Pichler connects the shift from the professional to individual level as a method to include her female readership in a more direct way. Although they may not be authors, as women, they can read an example of literary discourse produced by a woman. Pichler also acknowledges signing her work, a strategy that not all female authors chose to follow. In the final sentence she refers to her objection to anonymous reviews, a reason that applies to any review author, regardless of

¹⁰⁹ "Only as one female writer to another female writer, or rather as woman to woman would I wish to speak to the Author; and as what I have to say to her concerns my entire sex, which has so much right to be proud of her, I will take the liberty of saying it openly under my name. Anonymous reviews have always been abhorrent to me."

gender. This gesture seems to contradict the one made in the previous sentence. Now, rather than downplaying her authority as an author, in favor of her connection to readers as a woman, she justifies her behavior in terms that are not tied to gender.

Pichler contextualizes her interest in *Corinne* and in de Staël's earlier novel *Delphine* by recognizing Staël's status as an exemplar for the successful female novelist:

Es kann keinem Weibe gleichgültig seyn, was eine der vorzüglichsten ihres Geschlechtes über den Werth und die Bestimmung ihrer Schwestern denkt; es kann es um so weniger in der jetzigen Zeit, wo man in so vielen Schriften bößhafte und ungerechte Ausfälle auf jedes Weib findet, das neben der Sorge für Küche und Haushalt noch eine edlere Verwendung ihrer Kräfte kennt (167).¹¹⁰

Pichler insists that Staël's prominence has increased the imperative for women readers to know Staël's opinion of women more generally. A sense of urgency stems from the reminder that Pichler and Staël write at a time in which women's activity beyond caring for home and hearth is being attacked. Pichler defends the ambition of a woman for self-improvement as "noble," as long as it complements, not supplants, her domestic responsibilities.

From this point on the essay introduces a series of rhetorical questions, each question more skeptical than the first. The first question asks merely *why* Staël chose to portray educated woman as excluded from domestic happiness. The

¹¹⁰ "No woman can be indifferent to what one of the most exceptional members of her sex thinks about the value and place of her sisters; even less so in the current time, when one finds cruel and unjust diatribes in so many writings against every woman who, besides concern for kitchen and household, can find another, more noble use for her abilities."

subsequent questions probe the implications of this exclusion. By asking whether it is possible that Staël meant to portray women as having to choose between a "höhere Geistesbildung" ("higher mental cultivation") and their "wahre Bestimmung" ("true calling"), Pichler is in effect entering an ongoing debate. Pichler's review of *Corinne* is singular in taking the opportunity to argue for more rights and education for women. Male reviewers were inspired by Corinne's role as a *Genie*, but tended to identify with her, rather than see her as a particularly feminine figure (Röhnert 196). Helmina von Chezy's review in *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* considers Corinne's sad end to be a warning to women to remain humble, emulating Corinne's unambitious sister Lucilia who finds domestic bliss (Röhnert 195). Pichler takes a different tact, pointing out the flaws of accepting the fate of Staël's heroines (or women who aspire to their degree of knowledge) as immutable. In her rhetorical build up, Pichler uses the conditional to underscore her incredulity:

Sollte Frau von Stael wirklich haben zeigen wollen, daß jede Erhebung des weiblichen Geistes über die allgemeinen Bedürfnisse der Küche, der Handarbeit und Kinderstube als Wärterinn (denn zur Erziehung gehört etwas Höheres) gefährlich und ein Abweg sey, der uns unserem Glücke entführt? (172).¹¹¹

These rhetorical questions appeal to the reasoning of Pichler's readers. They cast doubt on de Staël's intention and on what some readers have read into the novel. This positions Pichler closer in relation to other literary critics than to de Staël. It also makes a distinction about women's involvement in child rearing. Similar to the

¹¹¹ "Should Frau von Stael really have wanted to show that every elevation of the feminine spirit above the general needs of the kitchen, handiwork, and the nursery as 'watcher' (for something higher is required for the raising [of the children]) would be dangerous and a wrong way which takes our happiness from us?"

reference to "noble" ways to spend ones energies ("Kräfte"), Pichler distinguishes "watching" children from "raising" them. Pichler agrees that the demands of the kitchen, handiwork, and childcare are the domain of women. She refutes, however, the assumption that they leave no time for other, personally rewarding activities (172-3) and that talented or educated women are fated by these inborn talents to be less apt wives and mothers. Rather, it makes them more fully human:

So bald alles, was wir lernen, üben, denken, dem höchsten Zwecke — nicht nur des *Weibes*, sondern des *Menschen* untergeordnet wird — dem Zwecke moralischer Veredelung; so bald das gebildete Weib auch eben darum das bessere Weib, die verständigere Hauswirthinn, die erfahrenere Erzieherinn, die treuere verlässlichere Freundinn des Mannes seyn wird: so werden alle Klagen über die falsche Richtung und die schädlichen Folgen der höheren Cultur des weiblichen Geschlechtes wegfallen. (173) [emphasis in original]¹¹²

In this passage, Pichler describes what is required to overcome the stigma against women's education: it must be seen as *complementary*, not contradictory, to women's moral development. In a phrase that could as easily have come from La Roche, moral development is named as the highest purpose of humanity. As a member of the human race, everything that a woman learns improves society as a whole. Pichler contextualizes what this means for women in a way that does not challenge women's position as homemakers. By embodying a thoughtful, well read woman, who even goes so far as to put her thoughts into writing for a public audience, Pichler herself is evidence for the argument her essay makes.

¹¹² As soon as everything we learn, practice, think is subordinated to the highest goal — not only of *women*, but of *humans* — the goal of moral ennoblement; as soon as the more educated woman is for that reason the better woman, the more understanding household manager, the experienced rearer of children, the loyal and trustworthy friend of the man: then the complaints about the false direction and the harmful consequences of higher culture for the female sex will fall away.

Immediately following this high point, however, is Pichler's interruption, a return to her specific location of writing: the *Morgenblatt*. "Doch genug von diesem Gegenstand, über den sich weit mehr sagen ließe, als der Raum dieser Blätter gestattet" (174).¹¹³ It is not that Pichler has no more to say on the matter, nor that a satisfactory solution has been found. Rather, Pichler reminds the reader of the formal limitations of her text. By writing in a short form (an essay) about much longer works, some ideas will necessarily remain unexplored. By mentioning "these pages" as limits to her writing, Pichler calls up associations with limitations on published thought: the considerations of an editor, a censor, or even the limitations of the printed page. By mentioning these limitations, Pichler defends herself against any accusations she may be approaching her subject matter too naïvely.

This early essay clearly demarcates Pichler's position in the literary public sphere. She acknowledges her connection to one of the most famous women of the day as a "Schriftstellerin," and criticizes de Staël's choice of unhappy endings for educated heroines. Readers enter the debate in Pichler's reference to how relevant de Staël's novel is to women and indeed, to an entire "Geschlecht." She also self-referentially remarks on the constraints on printed thoughts. Not only has Pichler entered a literary debate about a popular author, but she has triangulated her relationship to this author via other critics and her own experience. Pichler situates her essay as the product of a woman on a literary text written by a woman firmly in the literary public sphere.

¹¹³ "But enough of this matter, about which one could say much more than the space in these pages allows"

Therese Huber similarly participated in debates on literary works by famous authors. “*Die letzte Liebe die Stärkste Goethes Leben 3r Teil S. 322*” (1816) was published a few months before Huber began to edit the *Kunstblatt*, a supplement the *Morgenblatt*. At this time, Goethe’s dominance as an author and literary critic was well established. Like many authors of her day, Huber was inspired by Goethe’s autobiographical work, and wished to write her own autobiography in a similar style (Heuser “Fragmentierung” 407-408). This essay is relatively short: only about two and a half columns in the *Morgenblatt*. It does have a title, but was published anonymously, which means that, unlike Pichler’s essay on de Staël, Huber does not identify herself in this essay either as an author or as a woman.

Huber's essay begins with a quotation from Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* referenced in the title, and is immediately followed by Huber's critical reaction, which declares that it is not the first love, but the last love, that is the strongest (162). Following in the tradition of the informal essay that relies on personal experience rather than to ideational systems, Huber draws on her own experience. Huber responds to Goethe's description of first love as a commonplace. In spite of prioritizing personal experience, the text does not continue on an autobiographical bent. Rather, Huber compares first love and last love, relating the differences between the two to the relative stages of life at which each occurs.

Although Huber reacts to the passage from Goethe in the first person (“ich kann ihn nicht als erwiesen ansehen”), her description alternates between the first person plural perspective (wir) and third person singular perspective (“der Mensch”) for the rest of the essay. Like Pichler’s use of rhetorical questions, the

second person perspective draws in the reader. Huber invites her reader to agree or disagree with the description she is providing on their behalf. The choice of writing from a “we” perspective emphasizes that Huber is describing an emotion shared between two people, per the heteronormative, monogamous cultural standards of her time. It also avoids having to identify the author’s gender, although given literary conventions of the day, readers likely assumed a male author. Huber criticizes what she sees as an unreflective experience of first love, emphasized in her reference to the spectator's stunned attention captured in the idea of the "Badaud":

So gehen wir rasch zu Werke und lieben ungeheuer, und genießen alle trivialen Wunderbegebenheiten unsrer Leidenschaft mit einer wahren Badauds-Einfalt, uns täglich verwundernd, wie gewaltig der Mensch doch lieben kann! (163)¹¹⁴

Without repeating the quotation or his name, Huber refers back to Goethe's claim in this passage. Huber does not disagree with Goethe that the first love is a remarkable experience, one-of-a-kind, but that it is most closely related to passion. She seems to suggest that what is powerful in a first love is how completely one can lose ones self in the experience of being in love, not the feeling of infinite, non-repeatable permanence, which Goethe claims. In first love one loses the ability to reflect on what is occurring. Huber is not interested in idealizing that moment.

In contrast, more barriers exist to fulfilling last love, since one has already established him- or herself without this relationship:

In diesem Alter weben wir unsre Leidenschaft nicht in unser Leben ein, sondern sie drängt sich in das schon bestimmte

¹¹⁴ So we go quickly to work and love monstrously, and enjoy all the trivial chance encounters of our passion with a true Badaud-like simplicity, daily wondering at just how violently one can love!

Gewebe, verwirrt es, oder kann nur durch eine gänzliche Abweichung von seinem bestehenden Gang in ihm aufgenommen werden. (163) ¹¹⁵

Huber shifts the sense of agency in this second passage. Whereas in the first the lover takes an active role in "loving monstrously," in the second passion is the active party, pressing its way into an already existing pattern. The woven pattern is either confused or has to begin again in a new pattern. The metaphor of woven fabric reinforces the idea, but without any particular connection to women's handiwork. Rather, it serves her as a metaphor for life, in reference all the way back to the three fates spinning the thread of life. Unlike La Roche's explicit connection between her writing and knitting, in her essay, Huber describes her experience of love with a textile metaphor without denoting it as being specifically a woman's experience.

In later essays Huber makes her position as a woman reader much more explicit. One such example is Huber's essay, "Freymuthige Ansichten über Frau von Woltmanns Werk, über die Natur, Bestimmung, Tugend und Bildung der Frau" (1826).¹¹⁶ The work under scrutiny in this essay is Karoline von Woltmann's over 400-page volume on the nature of women, published in 1826. As such, Huber's review from the same year is a timely reflection on a recent publication. The most significant contribution of Woltmann's work is her opinion that only women are capable of writing about women's experiences. Woltmann and Huber were in contact through correspondence, and their letters have been published, together

¹¹⁵ In this age we do not weave our passion into our life, rather it barges into the already established fabric, confuses it, or can only be taken up into it through a complete aberration from its current path.

¹¹⁶ "Frank Opinions on Frau von Woltmanns Work on the Nature, Purpose, Virtue, and Education of the Woman"

with one essay from each author, including “Freymuthige Ansichten” by Huber (Leuschner, *Ein Diskurs über Leben und Schreiben*). Woltmann, like Huber, was an early pioneer for women as editors of journals, editing the leisure reading journal *Der Kranz* in Prague from 1824-26 (Leuschner *Ein Diskurs* 9).

By 1826, Huber was no longer the editor of the *Morgenblatt* and her presence as a reviewer was less frequent. Included in the *Literaturblatt*, the essay begins without publication information or price, unlike most other reviews. It is much longer and thus more in line with other classic essays, filling eight columns which constitutes the entire length of the *Literaturblatt* for that week. Like Pichler’s essay about de Staël, Huber distances herself from accusations of scholarliness. Huber uses the conditional as she introduces her justification for writing:

Eine Anzeige dieses Werkes in einem unserer Journale soll gesagt haben, daß es von einem Weibe recensirt [sic] werden müsse. Diese Aeüßerung ermuthigt mich — nicht dasselbe zu recensiren, das schließt einen Begriff ein, den die Beurtheilung eines Weibes ausschließt; aber über dasselbe an diesem Orte zu sprechen, es anzuempfehlen, und es zu tadeln (141).¹¹⁷

Much like Ehrmann’s rejection of *Gelehrte Frau* in favor of *Denkerin* as a title for her well-read and thoughtful readers, Huber dismisses the prospect of reviewing a work as inappropriate for women. She then goes on to describe what actions she will take: discuss the work, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. In essence, she takes the steps of reviewing the work. It appears from this passage that Huber was interested avoiding giving her essay a label that would raise eyebrows. Even the

¹¹⁷ An announcement of this work in one of our journals said that it should be reviewed by a woman. This expression encouraged me — not to review it, that includes an apprehension that precludes the judgment of a woman; but to talk about it in this location, to recommend it, and to scold it.

product was very similar to what she rejected. Much like La Roche's repeated references to encouragement by male friends, Huber highlights that she is responding to a suggestion already made in the journal, and not taking the initiative herself. Her use of the first conditional form, while the standard grammatical form for citing what was reported in another publication, does leave some room for ambiguity. Huber does not reference the specific journal and in effect uses this reference to suggest the connection of what she is about to contribute to a larger, ongoing conversation. The fact that Pichler also mentioned other reviews in her commentary on Corinne provides strong evidence that these two women authors considered themselves actively participating in the literary public sphere as it existed over the course of their careers.

That literary public sphere contained more than exclusively literary or artistic topics. Huber's reflections on Woltmann's work range from questions on the relative physical and intellectual constitution of men and women (141-142), to the significance of capitol cities in France as compared to German-speaking Europe (143), the intersection of class and gender (142, 143), and the relative value of public schools for girls as well as for boys (144). The entry point to all of these topics, for Huber and for Woltmann, is experience. When qualifying her statement that her long life has made her a valued judge of Woltmann's work, Huber writes: "Ich sehe schon das dritte Geschlecht um mich sprossen, ich kann also aus der Erfahrung sagen, ob die Ansichten, Bemerkungen und Folgerungen der Verfasserin

mir richtig *scheinen*" (emphasis in original) (141).¹¹⁸ Huber's experience of observing generations of children is a guarantor of authority on the matter. By measuring time according to generational lines rather than on noble dynasties, successive schools of thought, political movements, or conventional decades, Huber relates this assertion to the theme of the book and her essay: hers is a biologically determined understanding of femininity. By emphasizing "*scheinen*" (appear) at the end of the sentence, Huber underscores the essay as an expression of her opinion. In the next sentence she points out, she seeks to prompt her reader to reflection (141).

Pichler and Huber use their essayistic literary reviews to promote their own authoritative voice and those of other female writers as well as take on topics that might have otherwise seemed daring. Reviews of influential works were a way to associate oneself with the literary elite and participate in the public debate on the value of *belles lettres*. By examining how Pichler and Huber identify themselves as women and as authors, light is shed on the perceived acceptability of women in the public sphere. Pichler writes from the position of one woman author to another, but who also addresses female readers. Nevertheless, she wrote for a journal that was widely read by men too, unlike La Roche and Ehrmann's who aimed their journals at a female audience. Pichler assures her reader that her interest is in the human more generally. By contrast Huber does not refer to her gender in the essay in response to Goethe's contention about first love. Writing from her position as editor of the journal in which she published her response afforded Huber some liberty in referring

¹¹⁸ I already see a third generation sprouting up around me, thus I can say from experience, whether the views, comments, and conclusions of the author *appear* correct to me.

to her gender or not. Later she uses her position as a female author to draw attention to another woman whose work she felt deserved more attention than it had received. Echoing Pichler's recommendation that the burden is on women authors to write successful, well-educated heroines, Huber embraces an opportunity to respond when an earlier review suggested Woltmann's text would be better served by a woman reviewer. While these essays begin as reflections on works of literature, they evolve into reflections on greater questions: women's education and the experience of love. In the analysis of essays to follow, a similar pattern of expansion from original topics is present.

Social Experiments: Essays on Gender

Many of the essays written by Huber and Pichler, then, have to do with the significance of gender as a structuring principle of society. I will now turn to sets of essays by both women which explicitly address social expectations of men and women. While Huber and Pichler's literary review essays develop into essays that focus on the importance of gender, their essays that, in title at least, start with questions of gender roles also shift into other discourses that were intimately connected to constructions of gender: Nationalism for Pichler, moral education for Huber.¹¹⁹

Two of Caroline Pichler's earliest essays, printed in the *Morgenblatt* and then collected in her first volume of essays in her collected works, are centered on

¹¹⁹ See especially in regards to Pichler: Anke Gilleir, "Geschlecht, Religion, und Nation," and Karin Baumgartner, "Staging the German Nation."

contemporary conceptions of gender roles. Despite having been written a year apart, the two are meant to be read as a set. The title of the first, published in 1809, "Über den Volksausdruck in unserer Sprache: Ein ganzer Mann" seems to be harmless enough. Both explorations of idioms and reflections on the nature of living a complete and full life are standard fare for essayistic consideration. Thus, from the title the reader is led to believe that what will follow is a reflection on what it means to be a "complete man" and how the expression has been used over time. And yet what follows is far from being an innocent reflection on a turn of phrase, but rather, an appeal to return to the model of the "citizen soldier." Similarly, *Über die Bildung des weiblichen Geschlechtes. Als Gegenstück zu den Aufsätze: Über den Volksausdruck: Ein ganzer Mann. 1810,* as counterpart to the essay from 1809, goes beyond an account of the need for education for women, and explores the significance of patriotism for women. The first essay of this pair was published the same year that Napoleon invaded Austria and occupied Vienna, so patriotic fervor is not so surprising. It is interesting to consider, however, when establishing a sense of Pichler's views on human nature in general and gendered expectations in particular.

At ten pages long, this essay represents a median length for Pichler's essays. Pichler makes little attempt to mimic a conversational approach in this text, choosing instead a tone that suggests distance and reflection. Pichler makes many references to historical figures and events, and early in the essay even cites a passage from a seven-volume history of Germany by "Schmidt" in a footnote. These elements are more typical of the formal essay, which rely more on structuring

outside references than plumbing interior depths. It is surprising to compare this approach to Pichler's assertion in her essay on de Staël that she would leave more scientific reflections to others, and would speak to her reading of the novel. Experience does not play the central role in this essay that it does in others. Perhaps this is the necessary consequence of Pichler writing about what it means to be a complete man — something she can only observe from the outside.

Pichler spends the first, brief paragraph introducing the phrase "ganzer Mann" or "ganze Leute" as high praise. The paragraph ends with one of the few sentences where Pichler speaks from the first person perspective, recounting that she sees a silent critique of the time she lives in, if it is a compliment to be considered "complete" (277). The essay begins in the vein of much romantic criticism of the fragmentary modern individual à la Friedrich Schiller's "Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen." Pichler begins with examples of "ein ganzer Mensch" from ancient Greece and Rome, but continues to draw on medieval figures as well (278-279). In contrast to these historical examples, she compares modern society to a caste system, in which each individual can only focus on pursuing one goal, like a factory worker completing only one task in assembling a product (280). While this factory may produce finer wares because of the individualization of their duties, Pichler questions the factory as a useful metaphor for society. She achieves this critique, as in her earlier essay, with rhetorical questioning:

So ist doch noch erst die Frage, ob denn diese Vollendung, diese auf's höchste getriebene Verfeinerung aller Bequemlichkeiten und Bedürfnisse wirklich Gewinn für die Menschheit sey, ob immer steigender Reichtum und Luxus wirklich die Völker glücklicher machen, ob die sittliche

Ausbildung immer gleichen Schritt mit der politischen und Verstandescultur [sic] halte? (281-2).

The *Vollendung* (completion) to which Pichler refers is not a balanced, whole human being, but a processed good produced by the factory, associated via her subsequent phrases with an excess of refinement. The value of this development for broader society is called into question, particularly in light of different rates of development between social conventions and political culture. In these reflections it is easy to hear echoes of Rousseau's critique of the division of society through their work and his appeal to return to a more "natural" state of living.

Pichler does not see the fragmentation of the individual as an inevitable step in historical progress, but rather blames it on one modern convention: standing armies (283). She announces this view at the mid-point of her essay, but does not immediately elaborate on it, choosing instead to recount the history and legacy of free imperial cities. Drawing specifically on examples from German history, Pichler describes the establishment of cities as the means to a successful society, as long as the citizens of the city were willing to fight to protect what they had built up. "So lange die Städte kriegerisch blieben, blieben sie auch mächtig und blühend, und der Flor des Handels und der Fleiß des Volkes litt nicht unter dieser doppelten Kraftäußerung" (287).¹²⁰ The discussion by this point in the essay is no longer much about individuals as it is about overall social structures, such as city-states in reference to the Hanseatic League. By beginning an essay on a figure of speech,

¹²⁰ "As long as the cities remained war-like, they also remained mighty and blossoming, and the flower of trade and the work of the people did not suffer under this doubled output of strength."

Pichler created an opportunity to express political opinions about the significance of the *Bürger* for the establishment of a German nation. The centrality of the middle class, as represented by the citizens of free cities, is reiterated later in a description of eleventh-century nobility and their relationship to the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV:

Die Städte waren es überall, die treuer an ihrem Reichsoberhaupte hingen, indeß die Fürsten aus übel verstandener Freyheitsliebe Deutschland zerrissen, fremde Heere in's Land lockten, und lieber einem Ausländer-zinsbar, als ihrem rechtmäßigen Oberherrn gehorsam waren (286-7).¹²¹

Using this historical figure, Pichler expresses critique of political realities of her time: namely the invasion of France and the compromises that the Austrian nobility made with Napoleon. The freedom inherent in the essay form to move from topic to topic associatively and its instrumentalization as a tool for public debate as well as edification, made it possible for Pichler to express indirectly dissatisfaction with a political reality that was otherwise off-limits. Pichler closes the essay by calling for a return to the citizen-soldier in the present day (288). In addition to connections with ancient Greece and Rome, mentioned earlier, the closing image is of the Israelites rebuilding Jerusalem, defending the city with one hand, and rebuilding the city's fortifications with the other (288-89). The choice of Jerusalem is highly symbolic for its claim to religious authority, as well as a history of threats from many neighbors. There is a hint not just of Pichler's civic pride in living in a

¹²¹ "It was always the cities that remained more true to the head of their empire, even as the princes, in a poorly understood love of freedom, tore Germany apart, drew foreign armies into the land, and preferred to owe taxes to a foreigner over obeying their legitimate overlord."

European capital, but also an attempt to bolster the applicability of citizen-soldiers to every significant historical tradition for Austro-German nationalist mythology: Judeo-Christian, Greco-Roman, and German. In this way, Pichler displays an awareness of emerging nationalist discourse. Even if these comparisons did not originate with her as the “author” of discourse, as Isabel Hull might suggest, she nevertheless propagated significant tropes of the day, reinforcing their discursive power.

As mentioned previously, Pichler wrote a counter part to this essay that reflected on what it meant to be a “complete” woman. Similar in length, the essay “Über die Bildung des weiblichen Geschlechtes. Als Gegenstück zu den Aufsätze: Über den Volksausdruck: Ein ganzer Mann. 1810” begins with the admission that “eine ganze Frau” is never used as an expression the way “ein ganzer Mann” is (290). Women's education is used as an appropriate starting off place for a discussion of topics that push the boundaries of acceptable topics for women authors. Pichler describes men and women as “bildsame, vervollkommnungsfähige Wesen” (beings that can be cultivated and improved) (290). She does not contest the notion that women are determined (bestimmt) by “geistigen und körperlichen Beschaffenheit” to be mothers (290-291.) Much as Pichler references anything that keeps women from fulfilling their motherly duties as “der Natur zuwider,” she uses the essay to give this assumption a closer look (291).

Pichler suggests that historical events require changes in social pressures on individuals, echoing her insistence on changes for men in the previous essay.

Wenn das Menschengeschlecht durch große Epochen geht,
und ungeheuere Revolutionen ungeheure Veränderungen

hervor bringen, wenn ganz neue Maßregeln erdacht werden, die die altgewohnten Formen zerstören, dann kann auch das weibliche Geschlecht, diese vielleicht zahlreichere Hälfte der Menschheit, sich dem Einflusse derselben nicht entziehen (291).¹²²

Revolutions and changes are decried as monstrous (ungeheuer), echoing her earlier reference to actions that “go against nature.” In both descriptions, Pichler emphasizes the actions or the circumstances as unnatural. The women who take those actions, or are caught up in turbulent times do not forfeit their femininity. The reader is reminded of women as part of humanity, in fact, the majority of humanity, caught up in the same forces as men. Pichler next suggests that women's participation in society must change with the times. Such adaptation might in fact lead to a lower incidence of women entering the marriage bond. Due to the high mortality during the Napoleonic wars and the massive reversals of economic fortune during the Restoration, fewer eligible bachelors than ever were available. In essence, then, Pichler criticizes the fact that women are still inculcated with the one goal of securing a husband; all of their creative energy is expended in pursuit of this goal (292-294).

Even worse than the opportunity for marriage, however, is the lack of a sufficient number of men necessary for the economic recovery after the end of conflict (294). This situation leads Pichler to suggest a compromise: women could be prepared to help out when times are hard. She uses her own experience to

¹²² "When the human race goes through great epochs, and monstrous revolutions bring forth monstrous changes, with the invention of entirely new measures which destroy the forms of old, the female sex, this perhaps more numerous half of humanity, cannot escape the influence of these changes."

reinforce this assertion, and suggests changing women's role in society would benefit not only the individual woman, but also the state:

Fern sey es, irgend einem Weibe eine Beschäftigung zuzumuthen, die sie ihrer wahren und schönsten Bestimmung entfremden, und zu einem verwerflichen Mitteldinge zwischen Mann und Weib machen würde, das in kein Verhältnis mehr passen, und auf der einen Seite eben so viel an Liebenswürdigkeit verlieren würde, als ihm auf der andere an Kraft und Ausdauer ewig unerreichbar bleiben müßte. Ich bin aber der Meinung, ja, ich bin durch vielfältige Erfahrungen fest überzeugt, daß in uns eine Bildungsfähigkeit und Anlagen zu vielseitiger Vervollkommnung liegen, die nur entwickelt werden dürften, um uns zu viel selbstständigern und selbst dem Staate nützlicheren Wesen zu machen, als bisher geschehen ist, ohne auch nur eine Linie breit von der uns durch die Natur angewiesenen Bahn abzuweichen (294-95).¹²³

Pichler expands on her previous depiction of a natural role for women to play. This time, it is possible for deviation from socially prescribed behavior to turn women into someone neither entirely female nor entirely male. Nevertheless, Pichler insists that purposeful education is not such a deviation. The goal of this re-education would be to make women more self-reliant, and therefore more useful to the state. Pichler bases her argument on her own experience. In doing so, she reminds the reader that her ideas are not mere hypotheticals. Rather, her recommendations represent a practical response to a troubling situation. By commenting on how

¹²³ "Far be it from me to impose an activity on any woman that would take her away from her true and loveliest destiny, and would make her a reprehensible something between a man and a woman, unfit for any further relationship, and that would lose on the one hand as much in amiability as strength and power would always remain unattainable. I am however of the opinion, yes, through varied experience I am firmly convinced that there lies in us an ability to be educated and a facility for well-rounded completion, that only need to be developed for us to become much more self-reliant beings that could even be more useful to the state, than has been the case up to now, without deviating in the slightest from the path laid for us by nature."

useful women could be to the state, she hints at the role women could play in constituting a national and political identity. Over the course of the essay, she returns several times to the idea of a new identity for women in this expanded context.

In the body of her text, Pichler details recommended activities that do not require a public appearance or great physical strength. ("keine großen physischen Kräfte, kein großes Umtreiben im öffentlichen Leben fordern") (295). Additionally such work should align with what is already within women's purview as related to running a household. Among the recommended pursuits are positions as seamstress, cobbler, fabric and lace vendor, bookkeeper for the family business, and ultimately tutor (295-297). More women would pursue training and education if self-support for women were seen as a viable option. If women could plan on contributing to the family income, Pichler implies, then more marriages could be based on love rather than on a traditional quest for financial security via the male alone (298-300). In this way, more education becomes a prescription for improving life at home, not weakening it. All of these considerations maintain the assumption of a limited gender role for women. They support the notion that women were still focused on fulfilling their natural calling to become mothers.

Ultimately, however, Pichler tries to market this idea as a necessity by appealing to nationalist sentiments, and replacing the body of the mother with the body of the state, and the love of a husband with the love of a fatherland. Pichler argues that intellectually alert and informed women would make for more loyal and valuable citizens. A woman accustomed to higher intellectual insight would be

better able to bear the burdens that war imposes on a family, be it when her husband is called to service or when she has to sacrifice material goods for the war effort. Pichler writes: "Mit erhebendem Bewußtseyn fühlt sie sich im eigentlichen Sinne ein Glied des Staates, eine Bürgerin des heißer geliebten Vaterlandes" (300). Although not arguing for women's rights per se, Pichler suggests the necessity of incorporating women as partners in a project of national importance. Education is the key. Pichler ends the essay by portraying ancient Germanic women as enjoying a respected status by men, who showed appropriate enthusiasm and support for their husbands' war-like behavior. Thus, for Pichler, respect for women reveals itself a particularly German trait (302).

The essays considered in the foregoing, then, can be seen as a response to the hardships of war and reconstruction that Pichler witnessed in Vienna and Austria. She uses historical examples to underscore that her revision of gender roles was a return to tradition, not a departure from it. The associative structure of essayistic writing allows Pichler to walk a fine line between traditional gendered expectations of men and women as citizens (and as authors). She draws on the authority of her own experience to convince readers that it is possible for a woman to run her household adeptly and have time to educate herself. Using the literary feint of discussing idioms and historical figures, Pichler expresses her displeasure at recent historical events, first in a journal to a wide reading audience, and again later to readers of her collected works.

When we look at the corpus of Therese Huber's work, there is no clear pair of essays that were written as a set and intended to offer comparisons of social

expectations of men and women. Nevertheless, the topic of social expectations according to gender and how these expectations intersect with reading and writing is a repeated theme. A chronological consideration of two essays allows us to sketch out two different strategies to approaching the topic of men and women's relative place in society. We will begin with an essay from earlier in Huber's career, whose tentative beginning is strikingly different from Pichler's roughly contemporaneous essays studied above. A later essay uses Huber's position as author of novels as a springboard for discussing norms of male behavior. By comparing these essays with one another and with Pichler's essays, we develop a clearer sense of the range of interests represented by each author.

In 1811, Therese Huber was a widowed mother of four children, whom she supported primarily through writing and translating. The concern she feels, both for her tenuous social position and for that of her children is evident in the surprisingly cautious opening that this essay takes. In "Ueber die Ansprache des weiblichen Geschlechtes zu höherer Geisteskultur" Huber carefully establishes her perspective as a mother first, author a distant second, and yet who can not keep from expressing her opinion on a topic as important as women's education. When an anonymous woman contributed an article to the *Morgenblatt* criticizing men who prevent women from pursuing education, Huber responded by writing an opinion piece in a later issue. Huber emphasizes that she is participating in a debate that is ongoing within the *Morgenblatt* itself. Indeed, when we consider that Pichler's two essays were published in the two years before this one, it suggests the topic of women's education has been contested for some time.

Huber directly addresses her readers as “liebe Schwestern” or “meine Schwestern” (dear sisters/my sisters) four times in the first six paragraphs. By then referring to “unserm Geschlecht” Huber reveals her own position as a woman, and gestures to a familial bond with her readers. This rhetorical move is reminiscent of the familial metaphor in La Roche’s use of a motherly tone when addressing her readers. Unlike the previous authors studied, however, Huber begins this essay with the suggestion that she finds public nature of this essay inhibiting. The opening sentence states: “Ich ergreife mit schüchternheit diesen öffentlichen Weg, mit Euch, liebe Schwestern, zu sprechen” (150).¹²⁴ The illusion is created in this sentence that Huber would be much more comfortable reprimanding her “sisters” on their complaint in private, yet she feels compelled, however reluctantly, to respond in this manner. She justifies the choice with the fact that the essay to which she is responding was also published, and thus, the only place to respond appropriately is within the same journal (151). Of course, by this time Huber was a well-established author. This opening then can be interpreted as a gesture, or a model, rather than an autobiographical reflection. Much the way that La Roche or Ehrmann use their essays to perform one version of socially acceptable public expression of femininity, Huber takes a conventional, almost reactionary, beginning to her essay as a means of entry to an ongoing public conversation.

The trope of reluctance to speak in public is not mentioned again in the rest of the essay. Huber examines the assumptions made in the previous essay, and uses rhetorical questions to engage the reader in her critique. Her critique of the

¹²⁴ I shyly take this public way of speaking with you, dear sisters.

previous essay centers on the suggestion that men alone hinder women's desire to increase their formal education. Huber proposes that there is blame to share on both sides, and repeats the refrain that women's education must remain in the service of meeting demands of hearth and home. Huber's use of rhetorical addresses to her readers emphasizes how much she expects they have in common. For example, when introducing differences between the sexes, she begins: "ich kann mir nicht vorstellen, daß es einer von uns entgangen sei, daß die Natur beiden Geschlechtern ganz verschiedene Wege zu ganz verschiedenen Zielen anwies" (151).¹²⁵ The assumption in this statement reveals how pervasive a differentiated perception of gender roles as natural law had become. Rhetorically it is highly effective because it limits critique of Huber's position to something unimaginable. After describing the duties of women (childcare, household management) and of men (citizen and statesmen), Huber begins to expand her concept of acceptable behavior for men and woman (151-152).

The first appears in a footnote and consists of two categories of women in the public sphere. First is the woman who must take on a task better suited to a man: „von dem Drange der Umstände hingerissen, die männliche Tat weiblich vollbringt" (151). Huber then names ancient female historical figures who died at their own hand out of a sense of spousal or national sacrifice, and contrasts this ideal with women rulers, who lose their femininity through a career of masculine activities (151). In this footnote, an oddly formal element in an otherwise conversational essay, Huber reveals her knowledge about ancient and historical rulers. Separated

¹²⁵ "I can not imagine that it has escaped any of us that nature has determined completely different paths to completely different goals for both sexes."

from these historical figures are artists, whom Huber assigns to another category altogether. Of the later she writes: “Zur Vollendung unsers Geschlechtes gehört das Künstlerinnen-Leben nicht, denn dieses fordert ein ganzes Leben, und jene Vollendung auch.” (152)¹²⁶ Thus, Huber includes women artists as part of the greater project of humanity, but nevertheless as unsuited for the life of a wife and mother, since both paths are all-consuming. Without appealing to personal experience as Pichler did, Huber performs the role of an educated woman acting within the limits of socially acceptable public speech.

Huber turns the argument of the first essay on its head by explaining that “männliche Männer” (“masculine men”) (152) do not have anything against women pursuing their own perfection as individuals, only “Gecken” (“dandies”) (153) who are afraid that an educated woman could damage their alleged superiority. By listening to the opinions of men like these, women only encourage them, Huber chides. Rather than take the opinion of nay-sayers seriously, Huber recommends her readers prove by their own example that well-read women are superior wives and mothers. Huber warns against blindly following the latest trends in matters of self-improvement, and recommends women be well-equipped for their own time. Addressing her readers, she intones “Versetzt Euch einen Augenblick außer Euerm Zeitalter, denkt Euch in die Stelle einer gebildeten Frau vergangener Jahre, denn es gab deren immer, nur hatten sie die Form ihres Zeitalters” (154).¹²⁷ This thought is

¹²⁶“The life of a female artist does not belong to the fulfillment of our sex, because the former demands an entire life, as does the latter.”

¹²⁷ “Remove yourself for a moment from your era, imagine yourself in the place of a cultivated woman of past years, because there always were such women, only they had the form of their era.”

reminiscent of Pichler's demands that women's education should suit their historical time period. For Pichler this meant women needed to be prepared to be economically self-sufficient given the effect that warfare had on the male population. Huber's essay does not recommend a dramatic departure from the norm in women's education or socio-economic roles. Nevertheless, by highlighting that there have always been educated women throughout history, and that changing times bring about different demands on women, Huber projects the possibility of future developments onto her own time. Perhaps no other essay in this study comes so close to a phrase that is representative of a "Politik der kleinen Schritte."

We turn to one more essay as remarkably self-revealing regarding Huber's own writing and stature as a female novelist. "Kann eine Romandichterin Männer schildern, und ist ein Mann zum Romanhelden zu brauchen?"¹²⁸ was published in 1828 in the *Morgenblatt*, near the end of Huber's life. The essay considers each question in the title in turn, first addressing the possibility of women authors creating male characters, then considering whether men make effective protagonists. Like her essay on a passage from Goethe, this essay opens with an oft repeated statement: women are not capable of creating masculine characters in novels. Although she used popular opinion as a contrast to her own views in that earlier essay, in this case, it is more surprising to the reader, and rhetorically more effective, when Huber agrees with this statement (213). Confident of her reader's interest after an assertion so contradictory to her self-identification as a

¹²⁸. Therese Huber: Kann eine Romandichterin Männer schildern, und ist ein Mann zum Romanhelden zu Brauchen? In: *Die reinste Freiheitsliebe* (213-216).

“Romanenschreiberin,” Huber reflects on the ideal qualities of a man and the implications of these qualities for a character in a novel.

As Pichler’s essay on the ideal of a “complete man” (ganzer Mann) hinges on the interpretation of this phrase, so too does Huber have a specific concept of “man” (Mann) as the foil for her argument. Huber’s definition of a man relies on specific qualities: “Milde und Kraft, Geist und Selbstbeherrschung” (“mildness and power, intellect and self-control” (213). These four qualities become a refrain over the course of the essay. Huber recognizes Samuel Richardson’s *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753) and Johann Thothaus Hermes’s *Sophiens Reise von Memel nach Sachsen* (1769-1773) as examples of novels (written by men) whose male heroes convey these four qualities, but considers them too boring for the reading public. Huber does recommend their quality as moral examples, along with myths of Alexander or Titus, but suggests that readers are not moved by such perfect characters.

To further illustrate this point, she draws on an example from her own work:

Die schottische Pastorenfrau hat in dem von Therese Huber bearbeiteten Roman: *Ellen Percy, nach meinem Bedünken*, den Mann am würdigsten als Liebhaber auftreten lassen, und obgleich ihn eine Frau schildere, wäre es wohl sehr zu wünschen, der Hundertste unserer Zeitgenossen, nicht unsrer Romanhelden, wäre ein solcher Mann. (214)¹²⁹

The novel to which she refers, *Ellen Percy, oder, Erziehung durch Schicksale* was published in 1822. It is closely related to the 1814 novel *Discipline* by Mary Brunton, the Scottish pastor’s wife cited in the opening of the sentence. By referencing two

¹²⁹ The Scottish pastor’s wife, as adapted in Therese Huber’s novel *Ellen Percy*, in my consideration has the man appear most worthy as a lover, and although a woman wrote it, it is to be wished that every hundredth of our contemporaries, not heroes in our novels, were such a man. (214).

works by women, each with a male love interest that fits Huber's specific definition, she manages to undercut her previous statement that it was not possible for women to write a suitable "man" into a novel. Huber does reinforce the notion, however, that the real benefit to society would be to have this figure in real life, and not merely in a novel.

In contrast to this, Huber contends that a novel's hero must be carried away by his passions for a novel to be entertaining (215). She summarizes the situation of the hero of a novel thusly:

Aus diesen Betrachtungen scheint mir klarzuwerden, daß der Mann überhaupt zu keiner Romanschilderung passt, daß kein Romanheld ein Mann ist, sondern dessen Schilderung dem Leser nur die Hoffnung geben kann, er werde jenseits des Romans noch ein Mann werden. (215)¹³⁰

In this passage Huber ties the knot that her initial, surprising agreement appeared to have undone. She can agree that a woman novelist cannot portray men in her novels, not because as a woman she is incapable of achieving an accurate portrayal of the opposite sex, but because true men make novels boring. Huber's description also reveals a desire on the part of the novelist for the characters to live on in the imaginations of their readers. If a novel is successful in its portrayal of a man under Huber's standards, the reader is convinced he will amend his ways and develop into the sort of person that makes for boring reading.

Although this passage sounds quite conclusive, the essay does not end at this point. Huber seizes the opportunity to describe the relationship between men and

¹³⁰ From these observations it is becoming clear to me, that a man fits in no way to a novelistic portrayal, that no hero of a novel is a man, rather his description can only give the reader hope that he will become a man after the conclusion of the novel. (215)

women, and their reciprocal ability to see through one another, as well as describe each other. She represents the experience of a heterosexual romantic relationship as something fundamentally different for each partner. This perspective is quite different from her essay on first and last loves, in which she projects her own experience as universal, and compares it with that of Goethe.

Der Mann ist von zu roher Natur, um die Schranke, welche dieses Geheimnis schützt, wahrzunehmen; er meint vergnüglich, was er wahrnehme, sei alles. Das Weib hingegen fühlt im Moment des innigsten, geistigsten Einklangs mit dem Mann, daß etwas Unnennbares zwischen ihnen steht, und diese, das höchste Dasein beengende Schranke bringt in ihr die Wehmut hervor, die im weiblichen Herzen die Liebe begleitet...Und daß der Mann diese Wehmut nicht teilt, beweist das Dasein dieser Schranke. (215-216)¹³¹

In this final essay, Huber inhabits yet another position in respect to a male and female audience. In this case, she acknowledges a great difference between men and women, but does not shrink back from this distance as in the first essay. Although she writes this brief interlude about romantic relationships, to conclude the essay she returns to the question of heroes in novels, incorporating a nod to the importance of education:

Wir können gar nichts Glücklicheres wünschen, als daß keiner unserer Männer in einen Roman passe, und deshalb sollten wir alle unsere Bemühung bei der Bildung unserer Jünglinge und

¹³¹ Man is of too raw a nature to perceive the barrier that protects this secret; he assumes comfortably that what he perceives is everything there is. Woman however feels even in the moment of the most intimate, most spiritual accord with man, that something unnamable is between them, and this barrier which limits existence calls up for woman the melancholy that accompanies love in the female heart. And that man does not share this melancholy proves the existence of this barrier. (215-216).

Jungfrauen darauf richten, ihnen alle Romanenhelden zum Ekel zu machen. (216)¹³²

Huber's conclusion, then, is that although literature has pedagogical potential, it is more likely effective as a counter example, than as a role model. Huber takes the opportunity to respond to possible criticism of being a woman author to make a case for writing in general. She does not respond directly to suggestions that her gender limits her ability to write novels, rather, she describes the limitations to novels more generally. In making this move, Huber insists on her place as an authority on writing, and a participant in public debates more generally. By publishing this essay, Huber expands the possibilities for women writers more generally to be included when considering the nature of writing.

Editing the Self

Both Pichler and Huber wrote an incredible number of essays over the course of their careers. These essays were strongly influenced by where the author anticipated publishing them. Huber's literary publications were mostly limited to first runs in journals, and the short stories and novels that were published or republished under separate cover. Huber scholarship has followed suit and concentrated on her novels and short stories, with her essayistic writing finding

¹³² We can wish for nothing happier, than that none of our men fit into a novel, and should therefore focus the education of young men and women on making the heroes of novels disgusting to them. (216).

effectively no resonance beyond mention as part of her work on the *Morgenblatt*, and occasional references to her as "the mother of female journalists."

To be sure, the majority of Huber's contributions to the *Morgenblatt* are of a journalistic nature, are reminiscent of the feuilleton form that was just being established in German journalism at the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no solid consensus as to whether the feuilleton and essay are fundamentally different genres, or whether there is a fluid boundary between the two (Haas 67). Both are decidedly public forms that reveal the opinion of the author to an unknown audience, who is invited to think along with the author about cultural or social events of the day. Generally speaking, the emphasis in the feuilleton is on the relevance of the text for its immediate reader, and tends to refer more exclusively to contemporary events than it does to long-standing ideals (Rohner 512-514). Rather than drawing a line in the sand between such closely related forms, it is worth mentioning in this context that both the essay and the feuilleton were literary forms that lay well beyond the expected parameters of women's writing, and that in writing texts in both genres Huber was certainly positioning herself as a public voice among peers.

Huber's role as editor of the *Morgenblatt* shaped literary production beyond her own writing. Although it does not coincide with the earliest beginnings of Huber's literary career, Huber had been involved in the *Morgenblatt* from its inception, and contributed to it for over twenty years, from 1806 to her death in 1829. As editor she also availed herself of numerous opportunities to contribute in a variety of genres, helping to shape the direction of contributions by others more

generally. Fischer has shown in his article on Huber's time as editor that the literary caliber of the *Morgenblatt* improved under Huber's tenure as editor and there was a noticeable increase in articles on history and science. While it is outside the scope of this study to perform a detailed analysis of all these changes, I will consider Huber's editorial influence during this period of writing. Essays were the most important part of this work shaping the cultural and literary landscape of her day. It is within this capacity that her essays will be analyzed.

Unlike La Roche or Ehrmann, Huber wrote very few pieces that focused on moral education or proper behavior for women. One early (1808) essay by Huber can be seen as a transition from more traditional subjects: "Ueber Pestalozzi's Methode und Pestalozzi's Institut. Versuch einer Mutter, sich mit ihren Schwester-Müttern über diesen wichtigen Gegenstand zu sprechen." In this early essay, Huber takes advantage both of a subject that lies within traditionally female realm (children's education) and addresses herself specifically to other women readers, as a starting point for trying to convince others of the validity of Pestalozzi's method. In other formal essays that inform rather than persuade, she shows further evidence of her interest in educational endeavors that incorporated methods proposed by Pestalozzi, particularly Fellenberg's Institute in Hofwyl, the school that her son attended.¹³³ Huber's interest in soliciting and contributing articles on educational

133. "Ueber das Fellenbergische Institut zu Hofwyl bei Bern" (1808). "Armenschule zu Hofwyl. (aus einem Briefe) (1811) She similarly reported on developments for the needy in Neuchâtel: "Notiz über das neue Hospital in Neufchatel" (1812) "Ersparniß-Kasse zum besten von Handwerkern, Dienstboten und Tagelöhnern in Neufchatel." (1813)

subjects or from which readers could draw lessons was very much in line with her vision of the educational purpose of literature and reading more generally.

While in early pieces Huber would occasionally excuse herself for writing publicly as a woman, in later instances from her time as editor, she does not feel the need to justify her public response in a debate and simply responds as editor to a controversy between contributors to the journal. Amand Berghofer wrote a scathing reaction to an earlier review of his work that suggested (incorrectly) that Berghofer had died (96). Huber responds a month later with a cool but composed response to the accusations that Berghofer directed at the *Morgenblatt*, admitting he had been misquoted, but giving evidence that contextualizes the assumption of the editor. She begins by suggesting that she wouldn't have responded, if Berghofer had not accused her of lying. It is this accusation she is interested in refuting (Ueber Herrn Berghofers Aufsatz 108). In this case, Huber does not name herself, but is rather credited as "Der Verfasser der in No 45 der lit. Beilage des Morgenblatts 1818 enthaltenen Anzeige von Berghofers Biographie und Vermächtniß." There is an interesting tension in this episode between a sense of honor, or at least, of professionalism, that should be preserved by refuting the accusations of the wronged author, while there is a separation from the personal identity of Huber as editor. Although it was no secret that Huber was the editor, Huber followed the accepted practice to be acknowledged as the "Verfasser" and not "Verfasserin" of the piece in question.

Huber, far more than Pichler, worked within different versions of the constraints of female named authority, publishing under her husband's name, and

editing without insisting on representing herself as a woman editor. This is consistent with the observation that the increasing professionalization of both the role of the author and of the editor over the course of the nineteenth century, women increasingly downplayed their gender in writing. When one considers the confidence with which Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann edited their women's journals, it is a striking change.

The biggest difference between Pichler's essays and Huber's seem to be in the way each author connected them to their larger literary work. For Huber, essays remained in the realm of journalism; once they had been published for that audience, had fulfilled their intention. Pichler seems to have taken a different view, and to have insisted that these writings were a part of her literary oeuvre, something that she constructed and curated over the course of her life by publishing multiple editions of collected works or "*Sämmtliche Werke*." Christoph Martin Wieland was the first living German author to experience the publication of his *Ausgabe letzter Hand* (1794-1811), an honor previously accorded posthumously. Although *Werkausgaben* had gained in popularity for economic reasons, it was still a striking move for a woman author when Pichler's collected works appeared in 1815. Pichler published three separate sets of *Sämmtliche Werke* between 1820 and 1844, ranging from 24 to 60 volumes. When one considers that Goethe published five editions of his works from 1787-1830, it is clear that Pichler was both very aware of trends in the publishing world, and unabashed in implementing them for her own success. In none of these editions of her works did Pichler include letters or correspondence as part of her oeuvre, and in this way, rejects both one standard of

what women's writing should consist of, and what was being included in editions of works at the time.

Of all of the authors discussed in this study, Caroline Pichler stands out for having most clearly identified and set aside part of her writing as short non-fiction prose pieces, alternatively referred to in the catalog of her papers as "Abhandlung" or "Aufsatz."¹³⁴ The inclusion of these pieces in her collection of works reveals a contemporary understanding of the essay (prosaischer Aufsatz) as a literary form. Her essays, although similarly written with a journalistic audience in mind, were collected and reprinted, in some cases decades later. Her first 1815 volume assembled essays published since 1800. This same collection, slightly expanded, was republished in both subsequent editions of her collected works decades later. These pieces were collected and reprinted as a volume titled *Prosaische Aufsätze* in 1814, as part of the first twenty-four-volume edition of her collected works (*Sämmtliche Werke*), which she published between 1813 and 1820. In both of the subsequent editions of her *Sämmtliche Werke*, Pichler added a new volume of collected essays. In 1836 she first added the volume *Zerstreute Blätter*, and in 1836 she added to these two volumes a third: *Zeitbilder*. These volumes contain many reviews of novels and plays,¹³⁵ obituaries¹³⁶ and biographies¹³⁷, accounts of traveling

134. Catalog of the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus: www.wienbibliothek.at

135. For example: In *Zeitbilder*: "Griseldis," "Das Unglück der Dichter," and "Über Wahrheit;" in *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Raupachs Tasso," "Contraste," "Taschenbuch *Urania für das Jahr 1836*," "Homer und die Nibelungen," and "Vanina."

136. *Prosaische Aufsätze*: "Joseph Ködel;" *Zeitbilder* "Mariane von Neumann-Weissenthal," "Franz August von Kürländer;" *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Louise Brachmann" "Therese von Artner," "Dorothea Schlegel geb. Mendelssohn," "Pauline von Schmerling," "Gabriele Baumberg," and "Marie Gräfin von Zay."

destinations,¹³⁸ topics typically read as "female" subjects,¹³⁹ as well as a variety of other subjects.¹⁴⁰ Pichler was exploring her identity as author and as public figure in these essays. Hence, a common theme is the appropriate role for women in society, particularly as authors.

Pichler began by collecting essays she had published elsewhere, but eventually the volumes of essays become a project unto themselves, constructed with an eye towards being published in her collected works. Her memoirs *Denkwürdigkeiten aus meinem Leben* contain many passages that Pichler had formulated in her earlier autobiographical essays. More evidence for reading these later volumes as coherent *Fließtexte* is suggested by the way she structures her essays around common themes. The texts were apparently not written separately then grouped according to subject matter. Rather, the completion of one essay inspired the next. In *Zerstreute Blätter*, for example, it is not unusual for the end of one essay to serve as the starting place for the following essay. Later volumes list separate essays in the table of content that are one, uninterrupted text when read - which suggests that Pichler wrote longer reflective pieces, and divided them into smaller sections later. This is a move that reflects the expanding market for print

137. *Prosaische Aufsätze*: "Angelo Soliman," "Erinnerungen einige merkwürdige Frauen," "Rüdiger der Normann;" *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Graue Schwester," and "Jubelfeier."

138. *Prosaische Aufsätze*: "Tropfsteinhöhle," "Maria Zell," "Kremsmünster nach Spital an Pyhrn;" *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Kloster Neuburg," "Kirchenbau in Gran zu Ungarn."

139. *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Die bäuschigen Ärmel," "Modetyrranei und Liberalismus," "Kindererziehung," "Über Mißheirathen," "Die orientalische Frauen," "Bescheidenheit und Seelenruhe."

140. *Prosaische Aufsätze*: "Travestirungen," "Gaben des Glückes;" *Zeitbilder*: "Wahrheit;" *Zerstreute Blätter*: "Erkenne dich selbst!" "Allgemeine Nivellirung," "Schiller," "Macht der Ideen," "Art der Gesellschaftliche Unterhaltung," "Eitelkeit."

matter and hints at the changes in essayistic writing that were to come in the later nineteenth century and early twentieth, when many authors gravitated to the form of bound volumes of essays. In spite of this forward looking publishing strategy, Pichler was very much a product of the late Enlightenment, which can be seen both in the way she approaches essayistic writing as well as in the content of the essays she writes.

In Summary

Therese Huber and Caroline Pichler wrote at a time and in a place that created many barriers for women who were interested in becoming published authors. Many of these obstacles they were able to overcome because of access to institutions like universities, journals, publishers, and salons available to them through their personal connections. In addition to literary forms like novels, plays, and short stories, both of these authors turned to the essay as a means of expressing their opinions in public. By doing so, much like La Roche and Ehrmann before them, Huber and Pichler gestured to the presence of women in the public sphere. All authors shared the opinion that matters of family and education would benefit by being put forward for critical public debate. Similarly, matters of politics had repercussions felt in the domestic realm as well, and as such were important for women. Their correspondence reveals a professionalism and dedication to their craft that belie the assertions in the essays themselves that they only pursued writing in their leisure hours. In the conservative decades following the restoration

of monarchies in Europe, both authors were under stricter external control to publish what was acceptable to censors, but still wrote what they could express and took up topics that were widely debated by male authors of the time.

Particularly revealing for Therese Huber's perspective on the public and private spheres is a passage in a letter to Caroline Pichler:

Die Männer sind arme Geschöpfe! Aber ihr Standpunkt ist bey uns verrückt. — Wo der Mann aktiver Bürger ist, gewinnt er als Gatte eine andre Stellung, und das häusliche Leben nimmt einen andern Karakter an — es steht im natürlichen Gegensatz mit des Weibes Beruf: häusliches und öffentliches Leben. Wir haben weder das eine noch das andre; das häusliche Leben hat Vergnügensucht und Luxus aufgehoben, und das öffentliche findet nur statt, wo der Mann Bürger ist.¹⁴¹

Huber recognizes the dichotomy between domestic and public life: what does not map on to the conventional definition of these two is Huber's insistence that women have neither domestic nor public lives. Men have both, as long as they are citizens. Huber repeats the common understanding that the division between realms is as natural as the division between genders: "natural opposition to women's calling." And it sounds at first like she is going to continue working within this framework, since what follows what she calls natural are her labels "domestic" and "public." How much more surprising is it, then, that she says, "we have neither one"! In this description there are two oppositional pairs that do not map onto each other. There is a public/private divide that applies only to men, and there is a gender divide

¹⁴¹ "Men are poor creatures! But their position is shifted when it comes to us. — Where the man is an active citizen, he gains another position as a husband, and domestic life takes on another character — it stands as a natural opposite to women's calling: "domestic and life. We have neither one nor the other; domestic life has been interrupted by addiction to pleasure and luxury, and public life only occurs, if the man is a citizen." Therese Huber to Caroline Pichler, December 31, 1822. Leuschner, 102

between men and women. Women, Huber's "we," have neither a public nor a private life of their own. Each of these attributions depends on something else. A woman only has a public life as long as her husband is a "Bürger," a class distinction that sets both upper and lower limits — not a member of the aristocracy, or a laborer.¹⁴²

What this ignores, of course, is the ways in which both Pichler and Huber interact with the public through their writing. Huber in particular, at the time she is writing, is also the editor of the *Morgenblatt*, and as such has a great deal of influence in the public sphere, as it existed in Habermas's definition, in the realm of the printed word. This paradox seems to speak to Joeres' concept of the ambiguity of women's participation in the public sphere. Living with the great cultural pressure to conform to the model of a life led in the home, even in correspondence with an equally transgressive woman author, Huber invokes the cultural commonplace of a public sphere restricted to the interactions of men. Huber and Pichler's status as women authors, central to their correspondence which gives ample evidence of what we would now call "networking," connecting authors with one another in order for their work to be published, does not carry enough weight to counter the understanding that the public sphere is still an exclusively male realm.

Huber's rejection of women's domestic life in this passage is the part that challenges the traditional understanding both of the divide between public and private is. As we saw repeatedly in the writing of La Roche and Ehrmann, for

¹⁴² This passage in the letter follows Huber's condolences to Pichler on the breaking of the engagement of her daughter. In a way, this "we" might refer to what Huber and Pichler's daughter have in common. Without husbands, they do not have immediate, legitimate access to that public realm: Huber because of her status as a widow, the daughter because she is not married.

example, as much as they advocated for women's education, such conviction about appropriate roles was reserved for their future as housewives. The domestic realm was never called into question, Here we see a different approach. Huber does not challenge whether or not women belong in the domestic realm. Rather, she contends that that domestic realm has changed so much that it no longer exists in the traditional sense. Later in the nineteenth century the authors considered by Joeres's perceived themselves as firmly ensconced within a private sphere and separated from a masculine public sphere, regardless of how much their published writing takes their thought, opinion, and voice into the public world. In Huber's case, however, the private sphere has dissolved into commodities and status, that is, has been taken over by public concerns such as wealth and hierarchies, and she is left with no place to call her own. She shares with authors from later in the century the sense that for all of her writing, publishing, translating, and editing, she is still excluded from the masculine public sphere, if for no other reason than her status as a widow.

This is what I think she means by the phrase "ihr Standpunkt ist bey uns verrückt." "Verrückt" of course in this case meaning shifted, put to the side, rather than crazy or mad. Huber, like later authors of the nineteenth century, does not challenge the very notion of a separation of spheres, as later feminists will. Rather, there are spheres, but their position has slid to one side, so that, for all that there may have been a time in which women were considered a central part of the domestic sphere, they are now excluded from both the public and the private. This is in fact a quite radical critique, because of the potential it has for challenging the

notion of spheres in the first place. Huber does not go this far, but her challenge would be taken up by later writers.

Caroline Pichler's knowledge of history and of other countries is called upon when she describes the public sphere: for her, it is located either in another country, in another time, or both. Pichler encounters the public sphere as one belonging to men that existed as a historical fact in other places, but is lacking in Germany. The first time this is mentioned in their letter exchange, Pichler regards the lack of a public sphere as a loss for historians: "Überhaupt aber wird es wie ich meine, schwerhalten, in Deutschland gute Geschichtschreiber zu bekommen weil wir kein öffentliches Leben haben. In Rom, in Griechenland, in England gab es Historiker, uns fehlt das belebende Prinzip."¹⁴³ This, then, is yet another variation on the definition of public, one that does not rely on gender. Pichler does not challenge the principle of separate spheres per se, but if there is no public sphere, then neither men nor women could participate in it. This perspective sheds new light on the implications for Pichler's emphasis on women's role in the home as arbiters of culture and nationalism. If there is no public sphere for it to exist separate from an apolitical domestic realm, the home really is the only place where the nation might exist.

Pichler sees the lack of a public sphere as a loss for men. While she does not dwell on the advantages this might provide women, she does describe in detail why men lag behind:

¹⁴³ "All in all it will be difficult, as I see it, to have good history writers in Germany because we have no public life. In Rome, in Greece, in England there were historians, we are missing the stimulating principle." Caroline Pichler to Therese Huber, March 16, 1820. Leuschner 51.

Ich weiß nicht, ob ich recht habe, aber mich dünkt, wie Weiber sind in unsrer Entwicklung weiter geschritten als verhältnißmäßig die Männer. Diese bleiben manchmahl, oft sogar, zurück, aus Bequemlichkeit, aus Stolz, aus — Trägheit vielleicht, vielleicht auch weil eine freyere und dem Manne so wohl ziemende Übung ihrer Kräfte im öffentlichen Leben, wodurch eben der Geist sich schärft, und der Charakter erstarkt, ihnen durch die politischen Umwälzungen der letzteren Jahre, auf dem Continent meist verwehrt ist.¹⁴⁴

Again, Pichler is making no claims in this passage that challenge a two-sphere dichotomy, in which men work in a public realm to which women have no access. The difference is, in Pichler's interpretation, men have no access to it either, at least not in continental Europe. That leaves men unable to cultivate themselves as fully as women have, as the Enlightenment would have it. This passage is located in a letter where Pichler asks about Huber's children, specifically her son. In that sense, then, this thought about the public sphere emerges from very private concerns. The intermingling of the two offers further evidence of the porous nature of the border between the private and the public that Joeres discerns in her study of women in the later nineteenth century. Pichler's roles as writer and convener of an intellectual salon positioned her well for participation in the changing public spheres. Even in her correspondence her concerns quickly morph from familial worries to reflections on the lack of a genuine public sphere.

¹⁴⁴ I don't know if I am correct, but I believe that we women have progressed further in our development in respect to men. They remain sometimes, even often, behind, out of convenience, out of pride, out of — lethargy perhaps, perhaps also because a free use of their strength in public life, so fitting for a man, through which the mind is sharpened and the character strengthened, has been denied to them on the continent through the political upheaval of the last years. Caroline Pichler to Therese Huber, 11. January 1827. 130-131.

CHAPTER VI

LOOKING FORWARD, WRITING BACK

My inquiry began with considering the contours of the literary public sphere in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly as pertains to women authors. Over the roughly fifty years examined here, the publishing industry expanded rapidly, and then restructured in response to market pressure exacerbated by the effects of scarcity during the Napoleonic wars. This time period is marked for its experimental attitude to genre and the invigoration of ideas that Enlightenment thinking brought. Women responded positively to suggestions that they had an equal and important part to play in the improvement of society. One means of pursuing this goal was in reading and writing. Women became active participants as authors of works in many genres.

The second chapter considered one genre in particular: the essay, its history in Germany, its central role for Enlightenment authors, and the challenges women authors have faced in being considered essayists. The essay is more often a genre associated with the twentieth century in Germany, but John McCarthy's work revealed that there is a long and indigenous tradition of essay writing in Germany reaching back into the seventeenth century. Contemporary theorists of the essay like Pfammatter continue to emphasize its unique position as a genre at the threshold of formal definitions and communicative approaches. Scholars like Renate Hof examined the implications of definitions that conflate the qualities of an essayist

with the qualities of his or her essay. Any approach to women's essays will have to use definitions that are cognizant of the social and historical circumstances of essayists at various points in history. An essay is defined in the third chapter as initially recognizable by some formal elements such as a named author, a title, non-fictional content with literary richness, but ultimately predicated on an open dialog between author and reader, in which the reader is encouraged to think along with the author. In so doing, the reader helps constitute a literary public sphere in which ideas are debated, critiqued, and strengthened in discourse.

Following this I focused on the essayistic texts of four authors. In the third chapter I turned to essays by Sophie von La Roche and Marianne Ehrmann, in order to show the different tones that each author used, even within the same genre. La Roche and Ehrmann edited and published their own journals aimed specifically at the female reading public. They included a variety of texts within their journals. The short stories and fictional works in the journals have been studied elsewhere, but little to no attention has been paid to their essayistic texts as part of a broader movement of essays in the decades leading up to the French Revolution. La Roche's journal *Pomona* was published from 1783-84, and is heavily influenced by moralistic and sentimental writing of earlier periods. La Roche uses a conversational tone to model behavior that conforms to social norms for women, yet leaves itself open to interpretations that are also socially critical. Ehrmann was primary editor of her journal *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* from 1790-1792. This time period was politically highly volatile, and Ehrmann's satirical tone was well suited to the social upheaval occurring around her. Ehrmann criticized men and women for

their moral weakness, believing that humorous scolding was a more effective pedagogical tool than examples of moral virtue. La Roche and Ehrmann used subjects that were expected to interest women such as fashion to expand their readers' horizons to subjects they were expected to be less familiar with, including ancient philosophers or the politics of revolutionary France.

In the fourth chapter, essays by Therese Huber and Caroline Pichler, together with their correspondence, shed light on the ways female authors in the first decades of the nineteenth century walked the line between professional dedication and social conventions condemning such public expressions of opinion. Therese Huber shares with La Roche and Ehrmann the role of editor of a journal. As editor of the daily journal *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, she was an influential figure in shaping access to the literary public sphere. Before and after her time as editor, Huber wrote essays for the *Morgenblatt*. Huber did not always reveal her gender when writing, and in this way is a particularly rich source for exploring the lines of publicity for women authors in a professional setting. Caroline Pichler wrote for many journals and published plays and novels on her own. Unlike the other authors considered here, Pichler edited her own works for repeat publication, and included her essays as a collection of texts unto themselves. By doing so, Pichler demonstrates a forward-looking acceptance of the essay as a literary form. Both of these later authors reflect extensively on the role of women in society and the intersection of gender and other emerging discourses such as national identity and economic self-sufficiency.

There are promising avenues of further research stemming from this project. As noted in the appendix, a wealth of women's essays are yet to be explored. It was perhaps the biggest frustration of this project to limit myself to four authors and to a selection of essays from each individual. Nevertheless, I stuck with my case-study approach to the topic, for fear that anything else would water down my analysis. By concentrating on powerful examples from a select group of authors, I hoped to suggest the value of pursuing similar projects. Other studies of essays by La Roche, Ehrmann, Huber, and Pichler would be rich in their own ways, and the authors named in the appendix, and surely others whom I did not encounter, would prove to be incredibly relevant for future work on the position of women's essays in the literary public sphere. My work points out the need for a revised history of the German essay, in which men and women's essays are considered side by side over a much longer period. Similarly, an anthology of early essays by women promises to be a rich resource because of the content value of hitherto ignored essays. Moreover, an anthology would make these hidden gems more accessible to scholars and for classroom use. Writing in an age of digital discovery makes the potential form for such an undertaking even more exciting.

In a project that has an element of recovery work, the details about how and where these authors published their essays is not just an additional detail about the constitution of the literary public sphere, but is intimately connected to the availability of their writing today. Each author's texts are available in very different formats. La Roche's *Pomona* was republished in the 1980s in a facsimile print as a multivolume hardcover set, and as microfiche. Thanks to the wide availability of

microfiche readers, this means that any scholar with access to a university library stands a good chance of having long-term access to a facsimile reproduction of this journal in its entirety. The relatively early reproduction of this text when compared with others has to do with the early adoption of La Roche as a central figure in writing German women's literary histories, and the two-hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Pomona*. Since then, a few volumes of the bound 1980s edition of *Pomona* have been scanned into Google Books, but the copyright holders of that edition have an interest in preventing the entire text from becoming publicly available. It is fascinating to read La Roche's admonitions against publishers printing unauthorized copies of her journal, even as the copy I am reading is from a scanned edition that could ostensibly come under similar scrutiny by twenty-first century scholars.

Similarly, the first issues of *Amaliens Erholungsstunden* were reissued in facsimile print close to the bicentennial of its publication in the early 1990s. The editorial notes in the volume indicate that it was a part of a project to reprint the journal in its entirety, as happened with *Pomona*. The subsequent volumes never came to fruition, which leaves the contemporary scholar with relatively easy access only to the first volume of the journal (i.e., the first three months of its publication). Since I was interested in the entire run of the journal, I had to access original prints of the journal, which are fortunately still accessible, even if under strict limitations. The libraries that hold the handful of remaining copies that remain do not participate in the large scale scanning of collections, and as such, there are no digitally available editions. In contrast to *Amalien's Erholungsstunden*, the entirety

of Ehrmann's subsequent journal, *Einsiedlerinn aus den Alpen* was published in the last decade under the auspices of a Swiss women's literary history publishing series.

Therese Huber's essays are not readily available, despite multiple efforts to make her writing more accessible to contemporary scholars. In the wake of interest in historical figures around the bicentennial of the French Revolution, a volume was published that included fragments of letters, short stories, and essays. Since that time, Huber's novels and short story collections have been republished as part of the Olms series *Frühe Frauenliteratur in Deutschland*. Her letters are being edited by Magdalene Heuser, and have also been reprinted as dialogs, such as the correspondence between Huber and Caroline Pichler. Occasionally essays are included in those volumes of correspondence. For example, Huber's essay on Karoline von Woltman is reprinted in the volume that prints their correspondence in dialog form. The essays Huber wrote for the *Morgenblatt*, however, are more difficult to find. The *Morgenblatt* has been scanned onto Microfiche, and as such is readily available at research libraries. It has also been extensively indexed, and as such every contribution attributed to Therese Huber can be identified with considerable accuracy. However, that index does not provide information as to the kind of contribution it is: a short story, a translation, etc. As such, any attempt to collect all the essays Huber wrote involves comparing every one of the hundreds of entries in the index.

Caroline Pichler's essays are, ironically enough, the most easily accessible, although they have not been reprinted nor microfiched. Pichler's collected works were popular enough in their day that they are widely available in original print in

many libraries, even if they are not as widely available as microfiche editions of *Pomona*, for example. Certainly a researcher in Germany can gain access to a volume of her essays with relative facility. Yet, because her collected works are well outside the realm of copyright some 200 years later, and thus available in many libraries involved in digital scanning projects, all of her essays can be downloaded after a quick internet browse. Although I benefitted greatly from the chance to examine the original editions in libraries in Austria, the copy of the essays that I worked the most closely with was the version I downloaded to my desktop. I could edit them directly and take them with me wherever I went. The luxury of instantaneous access, and the freedom from limitations imposed by travel funding to libraries, made this project feasible. Certainly before the facsimile reprints of any of the texts, all scholars were limited by the availability of original prints. Not only does my project build on the recovery work of scholars before me, but it also has grown and changed in response to the increased access the mass digitalization of eighteenth century texts in the past five years. Even within the time span of my project, I have witnessed huge progress in OCR technology for reading *Fraktur*. When I first looked for these texts in 2010, if I found a PDF, it only existed as an image. No sense could be made by the search algorithms to recognize words in the old script. I just recently found a scan of the original *Morgenblatt* print of one of Therese Huber's essays. I was double-checking a translation, and searched for an unusual phrase in the essay: "geliebelt und gelöffelt." OCR technology has come so far that the appearance of that phrase in the *Fraktur* original was my first result. As comforted as I was to learn that this was a

rare phrase, and not an idiom I had yet to encounter, it was surprising to see this evidence of the rapid pace of digitalization.

Seeing how quickly this technology is changing research is both exciting and worrying. Exciting, naturally, because more texts than ever are publicly accessible, and not only via corporate collaborations such as Google Books or Projekt Gutenberg, but also ECCO (Eighteenth Century Collections Online) or the Sophie Project at Brigham Young University. I feel that it is imperative for scholars to be engaged with this technology as it emerges, and encourage collaboration between humanistic close reading and computer reading. It is worrying because it challenges traditional publishing infrastructure that must now reinvent itself. Whatever challenges the editors of the facsimile reprints of *Pomona*, *Amaliens Erholungsstunden*, and the *Morgenblatt* faced in securing a publisher, it is harder now to justify editions of works that are widely available as print-on-demand or as full-text scans. It becomes more crucial for scholars to be able to explain the value of a carefully edited anthology or reprint. If mere access to these rare texts can be achieved by other means, what do contemporary and future scholars prioritize in their in their anthologizing efforts?

The advent of OCR technology is also very exciting particularly for including less commonly researched authors in digital humanities projects. Canonical authors have robust digital editions. In its most intense form, that can be seen in the heavily encoded edition of Shakespeare's work curated at the Folger Library. The digital libraries of German literature, aside from the Sophie project, which catalogs women authors, are heavily weighted in favor of canonical authors whose works have been

printed in Latin script, and as such can be easily scanned into searchable text. The advances in OCR will allow us to similarly scan texts that only exist in Fraktur, in original or as a reprint. Thus, to investigate formal elements of essays in the eighteenth century, the corpus of essays could be analyzed quantitatively for similarities in structure. Andrew Piper is already using this distant reading approach to explore romanticism in addition to identifying similarities within Goethe's works. We are getting to a point where the limitations on our ability to reconstruct the literary public sphere are no longer what individual scholars can read over the course of their life, but what questions they can pose to data read by a computer that can read far more books than an individual ever could.

In essayistic fashion, these concluding remarks have taken us far from my original starting point. But this seeming diversion is relevant to reading these authors today. The literary public sphere at the end of the eighteenth century was expanding with a rapidity that can be paralleled with the increased access to information in our digital age. Meaningful comparisons can be drawn between women's access to public speech then and now. Elke Maar drew such a comparison with contemporary culture when she compared *Moral Weeklies* to "Infotainment" of the eighteenth century. As the venue for publishing essays changes from print media, especially newspapers and magazines, and into digital media with emerging conventions, we have much to learn from a similarly experimental period in literary history, when women discovered access points within an evolving print culture.

APPENDIX

Bibliography of Womens' Essayistic Writing around 1800

Because I could not include all the women essayists I have uncovered in the course of my research in the history of the essay itself, I provide a list of their names here to ensure that they can be readily retrieved for use in future research endeavors. Two methodologies predominate in recreating the historical record of essayistic writing by women in the eighteenth century. The first typically involves identifying a journal, then looking for women among the ranks of contributing authors. The second approach takes well-known authors, and then looks for what essayistic writing they might have written, and was my methodology for identifying authors for the present study. A combination of these techniques will be the only way to recreate a thorough reconstruction of women's participation in essayistic writing. The present study has benefitted from previous research done in this manner.

Taking the first approach, some authors I have encountered, and that would be fruitful for future research, are found in journals. For example, the editors of the facsimile print of *Der Gesellige*, Ed. SG Lange and Georg Friedrich Meier (1748-1750) identified two women as authors. Entries No 18 and No. 62 were written by "O" (Who refers to herself as "Chloris," and has been identified as Fräulein von Krosigk (Laubling). Similarly, No. 40 was signed "D" for "Doris," who the editors expect was Anna Dorothea Lange (editor Samuel Gotthold Lange's wife.) As editor of

Wochenblatt fürs schönes Geschlecht (1779), Charlotte Hezel was the first woman to publish a journal under her own name. This journal did not enjoy the popularity that *Pomona* did due to two reasons: Hezel's relatively limited connections with literary circles when compared to La Roche, and Hezel's rejection of the patronizing tone often popular in contemporary journals (Archangeli 77). Similarly one could consider Ernestine Hoffmann's *Für Hamburgs Töchter* (1779), Dorothea Lilien's *Papiere einiger Freunde* (1780-1783), Friederike Helene Unger's *Vermischte Erzählungen und Einfälle zur allgemeinen Unterhaltung* (1783-86), the anonymously edited *Museum für Frauenzimmer* (1790), or *Unterhaltungen in Abendstunden* (1792-93) edited by Katharina von Hesse und Xaveria von Bossi. Later women's journals include Helmina von Chezy's *Iduna*. It appears that over time, women became infrequent editors of journals, and turned instead to yearly almanacs (Weckel, "Brief Flowering" 175).

What follows, then, is a list of bibliographic information, as complete as I have found to date, that serves as encouragement for future scholars who are interested in pursuing this topic further. It includes not only new names of women authors, but also titles of essays or volumes by authors studied here who could not be examined for reasons of space. They are arranged alphabetically, and consist primarily of original pieces, sometimes accompanied by translations.

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