

“A Lustful Passion for Clarification”: *Bildung*, *Aufklärung*, and the Sight of Sexual Imagery

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Introduction

If we want to explain things in an intelligible manner, the written or spoken word, according to Jean Le Rond D’Alembert, the eighteenth-century mathematician and co-editor of the *Encyclopédie*, lacks the ability to impart a total meaning. For this reason, in his *Discours préliminaire des éditeurs* (*Preliminary Discourse of the Editors*) of 1751, D’Alembert supported the presence of visual imagery—schematic drawings meant to be seen in conjunction with textual description—in Denis Diderot’s massive pedagogical project by stating that “[o]ne could demonstrate by a thousand examples that a simple dictionary of definition, however well it is done, cannot omit illustrations without falling into obscure or vague descriptions. . . . A glance at the object or at its picture tells us more about it than a page of text” (124).

Despite the greater ease of instruction inherent in the visual sphere, however, the organizers of the *Encyclopédie* were careful to consider the presence and use of illustrations in their project. In the mediation between text and image, D’Alembert reported that illustration was restricted only to the important facets of a subject which were “very easy to portray and very difficult to explain” (124). Visual information was imparted systematically: readers traveled through a complicated machine, for example, from its surface to its depths in a series of clear and successive diagrams. In following this methodology, the encyclopedists proposed a new kind of educational process for the reader, one that was mediated by visual activation and interest.¹ Illustrations were designed literally and figuratively to peel back and reveal the secrets of nature and possibili-

ties of man. The eyes of the reader became engaged in a scopophilic, scholarly hunger that drove him (or, less possibly, her) toward further investigation.² In addition, the *Encyclopédie* proposed a new kind of physical interaction with the text: readers were engaged by both cross-references to other articles of interest and by discrete volumes of plates. Participation was increasingly activated by the required handling of various volumes and turning of pages (as opposed to a more passive and sequential mode of reading). In his *Discourse*, D'Alembert foregrounded the mental activity of reading the *Encyclopédie* in physiological terms which evoke a sense of bodily desire:

The reader *opens* a volume of the plates; he *sees* a machine that *whets* his curiosity; it is, for example, a powder mill or a paper mill, a sugar mill or a silk mill, etc. Opposite it he will read: figure 50, 51, 52, etc., powder mill, sugar mill, paper mill, silk mill, etc. Following that he will *find* a succinct explanation of these machines with references to the articles, "Powder," "Paper," "Silk," etc. (126; emphasis added)

He expected the reader to become involved physically with his education and to be assisted, or enticed, by visual imagery as a means to knowledge. The reader of the *Encyclopédie* had to manipulate the material, energetically seek out information for consumption—not calmly ingest what was presented on a single page of text. This practice, moreover, was cyclical: the reader was persuaded to locate the images for the discussion he had just read, and with each new bit of knowledge, the desire to read and see more increased.

In its polyhistoric yet deeply systematic approach, the encyclopedists' project engaged a broad scope: instructive images were included not only for the section devoted to the mechanical arts, but also for those accompanying science and the liberal arts. It was democratic with regard to readers as well—Diderot intended both the well-educated person and the artisan to learn from the *Encyclopédie*, in D'Alembert's words, "in order to advance toward perfection" (126). Inherent, therefore, in this practice of the collection, visualization, and systematization of information was the possibility of mastery: through *Bildung* (education) and *Aufklärung* (clarification), one had the means to better oneself and to move toward a more civilized state of being.

The equation of knowledge and self-betterment—*Bildung* referring not only to education but to self-cultivation—was an ideal of the Enlightenment period which has become a hallmark of bourgeois culture.³ During the nineteenth century, this concept was part of the *Verbürgerlichung* (or embourgeoisement) of individuals as they strove to move into higher social circles. Education became the factor which both connected together like-minded individuals and simultaneously separated and distinguished them from others. Along with the prizing of *Bildung*, bourgeois culture also professed an aesthetic appreciation for art, music, and literature.

Within the bourgeois library, comprehensive, scholarly, and scientific texts intended for both an academic and a well-educated lay audience occupied a special place. Publications such as Jean Martin Charcot's 1889 *Les démoniaques dans l'art* (*The Mad in Art*) and Hermann Heinrich Ploß's 1885 *Das Weib in der Natur- und Völkerkunde* (*The Woman in Natural History and Ethnology*) were expansive, illustrated studies which appealed to the bourgeois interest in the accumulation and organization of knowledge, and in the experience of visual information. Marrying illustration with an investigative blend of anthropology, ethnography, and sociology, the *Sittengeschichte*, or history of morals, is another hybrid genre which found a place on the bourgeois library shelf. This type of study, the first written in 1782 and steadily published afterward, focused on various topics but most commonly popular places and pastimes. They met bourgeois expectations with encyclopedic depth (often witnessed in chronological and geographic scope) and scholarly approach. The books also provided a venue for the study of the oft-seen and exotic. In fact, while the earliest *Sittengeschichten* focused on more native topics like German city life or folk festivals, as the end of the nineteenth century approached and illustrations were more commonly included, topics turned to more private, limited, or inaccessible areas of life and experience such as the cloister, the witch, or the lost Incan civilization.

In 1920s Germany, the demand for illustrated *Sittengeschichten* increased dramatically. And while authors still endeavored to examine social customs and moral attitudes in an expanding array of topics, the books commonly had as their true subject the "immoral" or erotic side of human behavior. Appealing to bourgeois readership, the justification was located in investigative reasoning, as Leo Schidrowitz, editor of the popular mid-1920s series, *Sittengeschichte der Kulturwelt und ihrer Entwicklung in Einzeldarstellungen* (*So-*

cial History of World Culture and its Development in Monographs), explained:

A *Sittengeschichte* wants to unmask, to exhibit facts . . . to look behind the curtain and to visit at the home of the time which it represents. Precisely for this reason, however, the *Sittengeschichte* gives mostly the history of immorality, because if one scratches the surface of times and worlds in order to recognize imagination, attitude, affairs, and purpose, the smallest segment . . . does not appear . . . therefore each *Sittengeschichte*, in order to demonstrate its task, must be an undecorated mirror of time. (*Theaters* n. p.)

But while scholarly method purported cold and unflinching texts, the books were often decorated (or illustrated) with fine artworks of a sexual nature by well-known artists. Statements like that of the author Curt Moreck, who described the importance of illustration as “one of the most important and most fertile sources that the experience of the history of civilization can create from the time” (2: 412), belie another aspect of D’Alembert’s visual educational experience, in which the *Sittengeschichten* became more popular versions of the art collections owned by wealthy contemporary collectors. Far different from the explicative manner intended in the schematic, “objective” drawings of the *Encyclopédie*, these books used art images to stimulate imagination, to evoke a sense of culture, aesthetics, and luxury, and to engage in another narrative not represented by the text. Compact and self-contained, the *Sittengeschichten* pushed the interaction of physical and educational engagement of the bourgeois reader in new and unusual directions.

While the 1920s *Sittengeschichten* met the modern bourgeois ideal of *Bildung*, they also intersected with the more general eroticization of visual imagery at the time. Wrapped within the cloak of scholastic investigation, however, the erotic content of the books and their illustrations were taken seriously by reading audiences. Images were transformed into legitimate source material for scholars, collectors, and libraries through the manner in which they were “framed” or contextualized, and, therefore, accessed and controlled by readers. In fact, within this context, works such as George Grosz’s *Waltzertraum* (fig. 1), which in its fine-art form was censored by law officials, could appear as an illustration with no threat of obscenity.⁴ Potentially “*unzüchtig*” (obscene) material was domesticated in book reproduction by associations of class, culture, *Aufklärung*, and

Bildung. And yet these illustrations played a Janus-faced role: while they served an instructional need, they also met an erotic market demand. Within the multivalent functions involved in the practice of reading and experiencing these books, issues of social need, sexual anxiety, and the bodily desires of reading audiences commingle on these pages, revealing useful insights into the bourgeois institutions of culture and moral order in 1920s Germany.

From the Bush to the Streets: The Use of Illustration in Popular Predecessors to the Modern *Sittengeschichte*

While the *Sittengeschichte*'s history can be traced back to the 1782 publication of Le Miegs's *Mehr als sieben Kapitel von Weltleuten* (*More than Seven Chapters of World People*), moral-historical investigations were not published with regularity until the early years of the Weimar Republic (1919-1933).⁵ One reason for the genre's relatively slow rise to popularity may be tied to the fact that illustrations were not systematically included in studies until after the turn of the century. Nineteenth-century *Sittengeschichten* were nonpictorial studies that combined anthropological and sociological approaches to provide information about the customs and habits of various peoples or events; educational worth and experience were measured according to the level of detail provided in textual description. With the addition of visual images, however, twentieth-century publications provided new opportunities to learn through an expanded and facilitated level of experience. Predominantly artistic images of female subjects, the illustrations presented to the bourgeois reader a subtext that legitimated unhindered experience, contemplation, culture, and eroticism in a scholarly setting. These associations, bound up in the practice of observing visual information, had their roots in the positivistic approach and utilization of imagery adopted from important illustrated scholarly and scientific predecessors.

One of the most interesting early models from which many tenets of the modern *Sittengeschichte* developed is Hermann Heinrich Ploß's book, *Das Weib* (*Woman*).⁶ Gathering information from biological, religious, ethnic, and historical sources, Ploß set out to publish a comprehensive work which described the "characteristic life and essentiality of the woman" (1: iii). Unillustrated, the text paints an anthropological and ethnographic picture of the sexual life of the female, from the development of sexual organs and fertility to child-

birth and breast feeding. In place of a copious gathering of visual data, the author accumulated numerous textual sources from which he selected important quotations. The text is thus organized into a series of quotes, connected together with introductions and commentaries by Ploß. This approach, and the didactic goal it served, embodied much of the same Enlightenment spirit of *Bildung* as Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*; in his introduction, the author stated that "the circle of readers exists not simply of anthropologists and doctors, but rather also of each man armed with a higher education" (1: vi).

It is a sign of Ploß's correct estimation of his audiences, and of their appreciation of his book, that within a year of publication, 1500 copies of *Das Weib* had been sold. The second edition, published in 1887 under the guidance of Max Bartels, expanded Ploß's original scope to include the woman in her youth as well as her old age, and was illustrated with 107 pictures incorporated throughout the book.⁷ The images relate directly to the text, corresponding to given subjects through their identification by figure number and caption, and by call-outs in the body of the text. Meeting the nineteenth-century positivistic standard, the illustrations were realistically rendered: most are line drawings or engravings after photographs. Likewise, they exemplify deep observation as a method to empirical truth; in many cases, such as the section discussing the physiological effects of Chinese foot binding, illustrations followed the *Encyclopédie*'s process of systematically peeling away the surface to uncover inner truths. That the female sex is treated as a specimen for examination in the text can be seen in the illustration of subjects like "Obesity and Steatopygia" and "Embellishments of the Face," in which several racial types have been gathered together in one image to facilitate visual comparison. The collection and taxonomical organization of these unsightly, unfamiliar, and yet alluring figures in the same image suggests that the "wild" or "untamed" female species has been stilled and domesticated within the realm of objectivity and Science.

Despite such a "scientific" handling of many subjects, the inclusion of other images in the book alludes to a more contemplative role for the bourgeois male reader. In the section on puberty, for example, Bartels reproduced an image of a four-and-three-quarters-year-old girl who had begun to develop breasts: her hair is loose, her face and neck are decorated with earrings and a necklace, her gaze is fixed at a point away from the viewer, and the unclothed state

of her breasts is accentuated by the loosely ruffled fabric draped around her upper arms and torso.⁸ These attributes were standard artistic conventions at the time—their place in the context of traditional medical and scientific representation, however, reveals much about the dual application of illustration in this book. Activated by these external markers of female sexuality, the reader/viewer was offered an expanded avenue for study: knowledge of the subject was tied to an intensified observation augmented by eroticism. While these circumstances may have satisfied convention, they also encouraged imagination, especially in cases where images from the fine art realm stood in for more scientific examples. As witnessed by the many reproductions of fifteenth-century paintings and prints, Bartels implied that artistic images held “scientific” information. The editor appealed to the bourgeois interest in aesthetics to allow the images to act on the text, taking the subject out of the real world and stirring contemplation and imagination in the reader. This mental process involving science, art, the female body, and observation was well practiced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and is perhaps best exemplified in the popular reception of Louis-Ernest Barrias’s series of sculptures during the 1890s generally known under the title *Nature Unveiling Herself to Science*.⁹ The allegorical image of Nature peeling back her mysterious veil to the watchful eye of Science found great appreciation in nineteenth-century French schools of medicine.¹⁰ For young students learning the tenets of empirical observation, Barrias’s sculpture functioned as an object lesson, exemplifying the rules of scientific method and visual alertness; it also embodied the confluence of Woman as mysterious, exotic, and sexual in a scientific setting. In Bartels’s second edition of *Das Weib*, these concepts are likewise at play: scholarly investigation is pulled from real time or actual event and the female subject of the illustration—and thus the entire book—is brought to a more imaginative and subjective realm. Like the young medical student looking at Barrias’s sculpture, the reader of *Das Weib* was presented with images of women for contemplation, the mysteries of which would be revealed through thoughtful visual observation.

As a testament to this interest, the number of images increased dramatically in subsequent editions of the book: in 1891, for example, illustrations almost doubled; in 1927, the number had risen to over one thousand pictures in the text. Certainly, the public response to the total of eleven German-language editions of *Das Weib* had something to do with its increasing number of illustrations. In 1905,

on the occasion of the publication of the eighth edition of the book, reviewers remarked that its success was based in part on its scholarly attributes, as well as “the partly erotic content and frequent pictures of naked women which have found their audiences” (Weideger 17). But since many of these audience members could find similar imagery in outside sources (postcards, photographs, or fine art, for example), other factors contributed to this sustained popularity and attention among scholars and educated lay audiences. First, such imagery and its resulting scopophilic drive had a more elevated appeal when located in the context of *Wissenschaft* (science) and in the tradition of *Bildung*. Second, the imagery and the text unveiled to the lay but educated reader collected spheres of experiences—body art, breast development, childbirth, infibulation—not immediately available to the male bourgeois in late nineteenth-century Germany. Meeting his curiosity under the guise of educational pursuits, *Das Weib*'s selection of quotes, anecdotes, and realistic illustrations allowed the reader an experience of things forbidden by convention, geography, and sexual politics. Though the realistic renderings and descriptions gave a level of objective experience, the presence of historical works of art also allowed the reader to locate these activities in history and/or the imagination. He was able to be a voyeur, but at enough of a distance to encourage the imagination of physical experience and mental contemplation.¹¹

The illustration of later editions of *Das Weib* confirm this trend: the 1891 edition, for example, supplemented the illustration list with numerous examples of art objects of distant, “exotic” lands. These images of wooden and bronze statues were intended to stand in for specific cultures described in the text and their attitudes toward such things as menstruation or sexual intercourse; the choice of art objects over realistic drawings after photographs feeds into this aspect of imaginative looking.¹² In addition, the book features an increased use of fine art, especially from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Most importantly, however, the illustration of spheres most closed to male experience, like childbirth and breast feeding, expanded both in terms of number and kind. In many cases ethnographic artifacts and drawings after photographs are illustrated side by side, signifying their parity in representational ability. Through their implicit comparison, “factual” characteristics are implied to exist in creative descriptions; artistic imagination, therefore, is afforded a legitimate place within scientific study.

While the need for realistic images should not be underestimated, it should also be noted that in the 1927 edition (in which many images have been replaced with photographic halftones), the pull of the artistic was still quite strong. In many cases, images from earlier editions have remained as illustrations, surviving the test of time. There are also numerous examples in which a photograph is illustrated adjacent to an earlier-reproduced drawing, forcing a comparison between the supposedly unmediated and the artistically enhanced characteristics of figures. What the photograph could not represent that required the assistance of illustration can only be that level of imagination and contemplation in the mind of the viewer, which was furthered by artistic over mechanistic rendering. Rather than prizing one illustrative method over another, though, it is precisely that dialectical space between the photograph and the drawing that is in the interest of the erotic. Such illustrations, while more traditionally realistic than examples of changing new artistic styles, also took part in the appreciation of aesthetic qualities that was tied to the process of *Bildung*. The unspeakable pull of the artist-made image is vital to the popularization of the *Sittengeschichte* genre during the Weimar Republic.

A strong aspect of that visual draw had to do with the standardized representation of certain subjects, especially those illustrating spheres of experience not easily available to the bourgeois male reader/viewer. Besides influencing the popular reception of Ploß's book, the imagery added after his death acted to construct and define topics, such as Steatopygia or body art. As represented in the numerous occasions on which those images were reproduced not only in the modern editions of *Das Weib* (when modern photographic illustration might better reveal visual information), but also in works by such authors as Cesare Lombroso and many of the 1920s *Sittengeschichten*, these images produced a visual expectation that only they themselves could satiate.¹³ The exotic, erotic, and secret qualities of these unexplored areas of experience, then, became ironically "known" through mass reproduction and limitation. In another sense, though, they also fed into the safety of bourgeois visual exploration, reproducing and making familiar images of the unfamiliar and unknown.

Another body of work on which the *Sittengeschichte* based its modern popularity was that of Eugen Holländer, one of the first cosmetic surgeons in late nineteenth-century Germany and an author of a number of well-received illustrated books on the cultural

history of medicine.¹⁴ What makes his books, like the 1903 *Die Medizin in der klassischen Malerei* (*The Science of Medicine in Classical Painting*) or the 1912 *Plastik und Medizin* (*Sculpture and the Science of Medicine*), so important for the present study is his use of artworks to demonstrate not only the progress of medicine but also the worth of empirical observation. For example, in *Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin* (*Caricature and Satire in the Science of Medicine*), first published in 1905, Holländer used images to imply a distance from old techniques and beliefs. As Sander Gilman has stated, through the association of early practices and caricature, these methods were shown to be intrinsically “unreal,” and thus outside the realm of serious, contemporary acceptance (*Picturing Health and Illness* 29). Within the sphere of medical and art-historical methods of looking, the art images act as facts, the truths of which can be found through careful observation.

Holländer’s books found a large audience, especially among the 1920s *Bildungsbürgertum*: both *Die Medizin in der klassischen Malerei* and *Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin* were reprinted and expanded with many more illustrations. Furthermore, Holländer wrote two other studies, the 1921 *Wunder, Wundergeburt, und Wundergestalt in Einblattgedrucken des fünfzehnten bis achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* (*Miracle, Miracle Birth, and Miracle Form in Broad-sheets of the Fifteenth through the Eighteenth Century*) and the 1928 *Venus und Äskulap* (*Venus and Aesculapius*). The latter makes the pairing of scientific study (here, under the guise of the god of medicine) with female subject matter (again, the goddess of love) apparent. Besides the essentialization of male and female roles (men with the scholarly labor of Science, and women with the leisurely pleasure of love—and further, the object of male sexual desire), what is noteworthy in this designation is the adoption of Greco-Roman classical ideals to elevate the work and locate it within the realm of literature and scholarly pursuits. Holländer relied on previous models of illustrated scientific inquiry (primarily anthropology) in designing the scope of his work: like Ploß’s book, *Venus und Äskulap* is historically and ethnographically diverse. Beginning with anthropogenesis and the importance of culture for humans as a distinction from animals, the author turned his attention to the cultivation of the body (genital operations, for example, in Africa) and the concept of beauty in various ancient cultures (such as Egypt, Phoenicia, Persia, and Japan).¹⁵

Also intrinsic to his study was the now systematic equation between art and fact, and the use of empiricism as the way to get to the truth. Following the tradition of Jean-Martin Charcot's iconographic studies, for example, Holländer delineated a number of sexual types and confirmed their truthfulness with art imagery. In numerous reproductions, such as Peter Paul Rubens's painting *The Three Graces*, he directed the attention of the reader/viewer to observe specific images and identify certain forms (here, the "second sexually accented type"). The illustration's caption helps not only to "diagnose" the subject of the image but to acknowledge its art-historical significance. Another aspect of Holländer's use of the illustration as art can be found in the group of color reproductions printed on heavy paper and bound within the text—a format reminiscent of such art journals as *Pan* in the 1890s or *Das Kunstblatt* (*The Art Paper*) in the 1920s, which included within their pages select original prints on heavy paper stock. That the color illustrations were confined almost exclusively to fine art images and not photographs has as much to do with a heightened aesthetic interest and appeal of the book as with the possibly inappropriate over-realistic quality of color photographic images of women in scholarly texts. Perhaps most important for the connection with the 1920s *Sittengeschichten* is Holländer's inclusion of modern artworks. He framed these objects with captions similar to those for older works, and even added collection information, where applicable. Their presence brings not only the study, but also the method of investigation, into the present day and pronounces it to be thoroughly modern.

Eugen Holländer was not the only author during the 1910s and 1920s to use fine art images in comprehensive historical surveys. In this category, certainly the work of Eduard Fuchs should be acknowledged.¹⁶ Just at the turn of the century, Fuchs began publishing a number of illustrated histories of caricature, social customs, erotic art, Jews, and women.¹⁷ Fuchs's goal was much different from Holländer's: selecting many images from his own collection, Fuchs believed his publications illustrated the dialectic between creative and economic conditions in history. He gave the general reader an opportunity to witness the oft-seen or seldom-experienced by publishing artworks that were unavailable except to the financially privileged. For the author, though, this intention was predicated on the socialist values of education (and satire) as subversive. Instead of seeing art as preserving utopian values, Fuchs believed the popular

art illustrated in his books to be a conscious response to culture as the product of exclusive and privileged knowledge made possible with money and power.¹⁸

Despite his intent, however, Fuchs's books conformed to the educated bourgeois audience's expectation as luxurious, illustrated, and comprehensive studies: the first hundred examples of the 1909 *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (*Illustrated Moral History from the Middle Ages to Modern Times*), for example, were bound in leather, printed on the finest art paper, and hand-numbered. Ensuring their circulation within a specialized audience, the volumes were prohibitively expensive: at its time of publication, for instance, the leather-bound edition of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* was 50 marks per volume; by the time that the second edition of the three main volumes was published in 1920, the linen-covered version had risen to between 125 and 200 marks each.¹⁹ While prices lowered after the inflationary postwar period, Fuchs's publications still remained outside the reach of the audiences for whom he had ideologically intended them. This fact was also noted years later by Grosz, whose work was included in the author's *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst* (*History of Erotic Art*). Of Fuchs, the artist wrote:

In his books, at least, he was all in favor of nudity, overt sexuality, Greek paganism, and the phallus cults of pre-Christian Rome—as stepping stones to freedom. The sad thing was that his books were not read as he intended them to be. . . . In any case, they were enormously successful, thanks particularly to the illustrations and the supplementary volumes which went into even greater detail and contained explicit drawings from all cultural periods in Western Europe, including certain contemporary photographs. (Grosz 151-52)

The altered demographic of Fuchs's readers was also registered in the collections of various libraries in Germany: according to Ulrich Weitz, while the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* was not in the holdings of any workers' or labor unions' libraries, it was among the most requested and well-read books at the *Reichstagbibliothek*. In fact, the *Reichstag* copy was "so well-thumbed," reported Ernst Meunier in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, "that it must be rebound" (n. p.).

Despite its ultimate audience, however, Fuchs's project represents an important social aspect of the modern illustrated

Sittengeschichte that intersects with the two more scientific examples of Holländer and Ploß—the continued peeling back and exploration of the hidden or taboo. Whether it was the teeth-filing beauty practices of the bush or the coarse humor of the streets, these publications presented the unknown in a scholarly yet imaginative setting. That which was considered to be obscene, or Other, to the social station, gendered position, or racial identity of the *Bildungsbürgertum* appealed to a more subjective investigative hunger and scopophilic thirst for another type of knowledge. These predecessors of the modern *Sittengeschichten* provided a vicarious transgression against Culture and socially prescribed customs for their readers, even while simultaneously upholding the realm of *Bildung* and *Aufklärung*. Their appeal was exactly their forbidden subject matter, explored by scientific and scholarly experts, and given standard visual form by realistic and historical artistic images. Within the realm of educational pursuits, these books legitimated the association of contemplation, culture, and eroticism. And it was on this nexus that the *Sittengeschichten* of the 1920s based their appeal.

“This Volume Should Only Be Sold To Scholars, Collectors, and Libraries”: Sensing the Limits of Visual Experience

It was not until approximately 1926, after the postwar inflationary period had ended and Weimar society had entered what some historians have referred to as the “Golden Twenties,” that the *Sittengeschichte* came into its own.²⁰ The increase of new and reprinted publications each year—up to ten new works in 1927 alone—corresponded to an official acknowledgement of the term “*Sittengeschichte*” as well.²¹ Though the word had been used in scholarly studies since the late eighteenth century, it was not until the 1926-1930 issue of the *Deutsches Bücherverzeichnis* (*German Catalogue of Books*) that “*Sittengeschichte*” appeared as a full heading alongside “*Sitte und Gebräuche*” (habits and customs), meant to denote a discrete set of books.²² Not merely acknowledging the popularity of the genre, the official appearance of the term also marked its expanding application: where once it was associated with social behavior reflecting its anthropological and ethnographic predecessors, it now referred more exclusively to (im)moral or sexual subjects.²³ Several important developments of modern German life can be associated with the expanding reach of *Sittengeschichten* at this time: the forced visibility of sexual concerns during the war, the

appearance of the *Neue Frau* and the issues she ushered into public debate, the modernization of German society and its ensuing problems, and the popularization of the science of sexology. Together, these matters were the subject of numerous *Sittengeschichten*, which often boasted the contributions of eminent sexologists like Albert Moll, Iwan Bloch, and Magnus Hirschfeld, and historians who specialized in studies of morals, such as Curt Moreck and Hans Ostwald.²⁴

Despite its widened scope of the oft-seen and seldom-experienced, the 1920s *Sittengeschichte* still afforded the reader a voyeuristic opportunity to cross borders of propriety (now primarily sexual ones) in a safe and undiscerned manner. This ability was dependent on two interconnected precepts. First, the texts were written in an academically and scientifically appropriate style while meeting audience demand to explore what was unexplorable but perhaps secretly desired. Second, the images blended realism and artistic representation to appeal to the bourgeois reader's desire to see and learn, especially what had not been seen before. While not sharing *Das Weib's* direct textual relationship of call-outs for figures, the 1920s *Sittengeschichte* still put heavy emphasis on the visible "proof" of the text in its accompanying illustrations. Hirschfeld's *Sittengeschichte des Weltkrieges (Moral History of World War)* of 1930, for example, explored the subject of World War I in a scholarly manner focusing on such topics as sexual activity at the Front and at home, prostitution, sexual disease, and the erotics of military discipline. Like Ploß, the author often incorporated lengthy excerpts from various sociological, historical, or economic sources into his text. Hirschfeld used visual imagery to illuminate topics of discussion as directly as possible, given the availability of imagery.²⁵ Used as visible proof, the mass-produced images from postcards, pamphlets, and posters (fig. 2), documentary photographs (fig. 3), and contemporary caricatures and fine artworks (fig. 4)—some from Hirschfeld's own collection at the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft in Berlin—fit the requirement as "Zeit- und Kulturdokumente" (documents of time and culture), which, in the effort of *Bildung*, could clarify a topic sometimes better than words.²⁶ As Curt Moreck explained in his three-volume *Kultur- und Sittengeschichte der neuesten Zeit (Cultural and Moral History of Modern Times)* of 1928, "an unlikely graphic detail often gives us deeper elucidations about a disposition of a time or a constitution of a soul as historical analysis" (2: 412).

At the same time, the presence of art images in the books encouraged the reading audience to move past objective observation to subjective contemplation. Moreck, like Hirschfeld, utilized modern imagery to elucidate sexual subject matter. For his study, the author illustrated the paintings and prints of such artists as Otto Dix, Jeanne Mammen, Edvard Munch, Max Pechstein, and Heinrich Zille alongside studio photographs. Interestingly, despite his recognition of the status of these erotic images as historical artifacts, Moreck encouraged his audience to see the illustrations as art objects through the presence of two complementary indices in the back of his books: the first grouped illustrations into subjects like "Love and Society," "Erotic Kitsch," and "The Social Problem of Prostitution." The second listed each illustration along with its maker's name, full title, and medium.²⁷ The presence of these types of registers in almost all Weimar *Sittengeschichten* points to the dual status of illustrations as evidence of both scientific fact and aesthetic worth. Furthering this view, in the majority of books it was common to find select images printed in colored inks on heavy paper stock. Appealing to the bourgeois reader's sense of aesthetic beauty, many reproductions revealed a careful intention to replicate printing effects, and thus to accentuate these images aesthetically as visibly different or special. Some authors even went so far as to add embossed or ornately decorated frames printed with gold ink to distinguish specific images further. Filled with such illustrations, the books served their owners as portable and compact collections of modern art, as well as of modern scholarly thought. They functioned as sites of German bourgeois culture and reflected both educational and cultural pursuits on a personal scale.

Within the private sphere of the reading experience, the books encouraged an aesthetization or eroticization of the bodily senses through their focus on visual fact, artistic representation, and subjective experience. This bodily or sensorial emphasis is most pronounced in the books from the *Sittengeschichte der Kulturwelt* series, the first of which was published in 1926.²⁸ The books were printed in various deluxe editions, some covered in leather or ornately decorated linen that were appealing additions to the bourgeois library. One of the first books in the series, *Sittengeschichte des Theaters (Moral History of the Theater)*, included three original prints in its first two hundred copies, thus participating in a cultural practice made popular by many contemporary art journals. Every *Sittengeschichte des Theaters*, regardless of the edition, included a

supplement ("*Beilagenwerk*") covered by an illustrated heavy-paper envelope (fig. 5) which protected a plain paper folder holding a number of single-sheet color reproductions (figs. 6 and 7). Again attractive to the bourgeois collector, the format mimicked the hard cover and unbound pages of the high-art print portfolio popularized after the war. Despite its mass-produced status, the supplement offered the reader/viewer the mental and sensory interactions of other aesthetic objects and at the same time upheld educational looking and contemplation. Located within the realm of *Wissenschaft*, the book placed a scholarly cloak over visual, and increasingly physical, engagement and thus purified an otherwise perverse or dangerous activity.

With this portfolio, the paradigmatic *Sittengeschichte* experience has shifted—the physical parameters of the book, and the reader, have expanded. Recalling D'Alembert's discussion of the bodily desire engaged by the addition of visual images, we must likewise acknowledge a transformation in the role of viewing. Whereas previous examples like *Venus und Askulap* contained educational experience within the physical boundaries of the book, here the participant can literally move outside the book, breaking its narrative and creating another experiential mode driven by his own physical manipulation of the enclosed materials. The act of learning—of turning pages, holding images in one's hands, and carefully examining with one's eyes—has been bared and offered to the reader for his own use in the supplement. Borrowing from Wolfgang Iser, one sees that the reader has been led to fill in the "indeterminate" aspects of the experience, thus participating in the "concretization" of the text.²⁹ While this phenomenological process may occur to some degree in every reading experience, by the nature of this visual text, the procedure has physically intensified. In this context, the participant was able to handle the loose pages, turning them at his own pace and thus personalizing the experience. Making connections between various parts and supplying meaning where it is only implied, the bourgeois reader became an active participant, a co-creator in the reading/viewing experience. By employing images that emulate aspects of the high-art sphere, the reader could likewise mark the experience as aesthetic, and therefore encourage in himself an even greater subjective, sensory experience.

Such augmented physical experiences of the visual can be found in numerous publications of the period. The supplement from another book in the series, entitled *Sittengeschichte von Paris (Moral*

History of Paris), contained a number of items which challenged the traditional physical borders of the reading experience and engaged the scopophilic drives of the male bourgeois reader. Among the assorted unbound items was the reproduction of a *Klappbild* (shutter-picture) which featured an image of a demure, modestly dressed woman with the title *La fausse Prude* (*The Hypocritical Prude*). If the reader/viewer wanted to appreciate the satirical image, he had to lift an attached flap over the woman's dress to reveal amorous items hidden underneath. In this and another reproduction of a *Klappbild*, the reader/viewer was enticed to alter physically the image before him, to engage bodily in its appearance and information-giving status. To participate in his education, he was made to peel back the surface to examine hidden truths—he was also made to undress the woman who stood before him. In the *Beilagenwerk*, the reader could also find a number of moving dance figure cards (fig. 8): pictures consisting of figures pasted loosely onto a translucent piece of paper. When he viewed a card behind the enclosed hard-paper frame and moved it before a carefully directed light source, the reader/viewer saw a stage performance at the Folies-Bergère. While optically and manually engaging, this visual apparatus also captivates the mind of the reader, simulating an imagined physical experience of a distant locale. Through these intimate and hand-held objects, the subjectivity and aesthetic imagination so much a part of the reading and viewing experience of the early *Sittengeschichte* models has been augmented through physical, bodily engagement and sensorial intensification.

Even in volumes where photographs were used, readers experienced this escalation of physical experience and sensationalism of vision. *Sittengeschichte* authors typically connected photographic illustrations with the contemplative or the imaginative through their mental association as "art": often images were heavily stylized and allegorical, and at times were even printed on the same heavy paper and in the same colored inks as other fine art reproductions.³⁰ At other times, authors encouraged readers to see more realistic, documentary images in an imaginative setting through sensationalized framing. For example, another book from the *Sittengeschichte der Kulturwelt* series, one which focused on the history of vice, had a special supplementary volume which featured annotated photographs providing both scientific context and an extra layer of scopophilic interest to the images. To get this supplement, readers had to send a form found in the back of the main volume to the publisher.

This act, while necessary during a time of concern over *Schund- und Schmutzliteratur* (trash and junk literature) and the protection of minors, also enhanced the secretive, taboo aspect of the contents. Once received in the mail, the supplement confronted the reader/viewer with a variety of images of individuals and objects involved in traditional sexual vices (fetishism, masochism, or masturbation) outside the realms of propriety for the bourgeois male reader. While the circumstances of receipt and the images themselves implied the transgressive nature of the experience, the practice of viewing and experiencing the contents was augmented by their contextual frames. For example, the experience of a particular photograph became all the more intriguing for the visual investigation and mental consideration of the reader when he read the caption. It explained that the photograph came from a collection of confiscated obscene material, and that another copy could be found by the telephone of an anonymous, high-ranking German individual. Sight has thus become sensationalized through the private experience of that which is proscribed or restricted. In another example, *Flucht aus der Ehe* (*The Flight from Marriage*) of 1931, a caption tells the reader that the accompanying photograph of an embracing couple was taken by a private detective. The frame could inspire the viewer to become physically involved with the image and to take the place of the professional investigator. This position not only allowed him a safe place to observe the illicit embrace, but also affirmed his ability to discern inappropriate behavior. His ability to look, it was proposed, was as professional as that of the detective. At the same time, this interplay of captions and contents increased scopophilic appeal—it reinvented the reader/viewer as an erotic interloper, a voyeur.

A final example of this augmented, eroticized visual experience exists in the supplement for Alfred Kind and Curt Moreck's 1930 *Gefilde der Lust* (*Fields of Pleasure*): the book contains a supplement containing sixteen red-and-green overlay photographs ("*plastisch-morphologische Bildtafeln*") and a pair of three-dimensional glasses. Putting on the glasses, the reader/viewer enhanced not only his vision, but also his mental capacity by testing his ability to identify the different sizes and forms of female breasts and buttocks described in the book. Here, the *Sittengeschichte's* merging of the visual discrimination of scientific or medical facts and the aestheticized and sensationalized visual experience comes to the fore. The reader/viewer's encounter is amplified by the intercession

of the extrasensory apparatus: the glasses are a literal figuration of the eroticized sight invoked in these texts. This connection between erotics and the senses was also recognized and explored at the time in the 1931 Verlag für Kulturforschung's illustrated series on the five senses. Entitled *Die fünf Sinne (The Five Senses)*, it too contained an intriguing supplement in the volume on Hearing. Inside the back cover, the publisher included a set of hot-pink phonograph records of erotic songs from various cultures.³¹ One can only speculate how the position of objective examiner and subjective participant merged as the bourgeois man sat in his study listening to the musical recordings.

While these entertaining supplements may recall the popular parlor games of the eighteenth century, let us not forget the sphere in which such images and physical, sensorial enhancements appeared—in the scholarly and scientific books of well-known historians and doctors and well-respected research institutions. The association of an Enlightenment phantasmagoria, for example, and the moving dance figures from the *Sittengeschichte von Paris*, though, is not so far-fetched when we consider each as a popular educational tool invoking many of the same practices that D'Alembert described for Diderot's *Encyclopédie*.³² Both devices make visible in an immediate and personal way scholarly information for the lay public. Participants in pedagogical demonstrations were physically activated by the intensified requirements of learning—manipulating materials (opening and touching books) and recognizing the effects of light, volume, and color on sight. Far more memorable as bodily experiences than as written words, these stimulating visual encounters compellingly clarified lessons of science. But in the scientific lessons of sexology, perhaps, visual pleasure and contemplation often merged precariously with the erotic. One faced the danger of becoming bodily absorbed in this “lustful passion for clarification” (n. p.), as the editor of the *Sittengeschichte des Lasters* described it, were it not for the constant reaffirmation of the context of scientific investigation and historical scope.

Sittengeschichten authors and publishers regularly noted for readers in introductory remarks the eminent doctors and scholars who collaborated on their publications, contributing texts and selecting illustrations. For the organizers and their readers, the involvement of experts assured the earnest nature and intended utilization of such publications. The pronounced assistance of proper authorities publicly assured the appropriateness of textual and il-

lustrative investigation within bourgeois moral order. In addition to the repeated contributions of scholars, the publishers of Moreck's *Kultur- und Sittengeschichte der neuesten Zeit* even included a list of "radiant judgments from the world of specialists." Among the experts who offered opinions of the book was the retired Oberreichsanwalt (chief state attorney) Ebermayer who stated that "[t]he book thoroughly follows a *scholarly* purpose and treats the material in a *scholarly* manner according to leading principles which are to be imposed on a *scholarly* work" (2: n. p., my emphasis). While such announcements of academically earnest intent locate and affirm the books' place in an educational sphere and distinguish them from other "unserious, dilettantish, and speculative publications" (*Bilder-Lexikon* 1: n. p.), their heavily repeated nature also suggests a recognition of the danger involved in such imagery and the possibility of an inappropriately stimulating experience of it.

Following this concern, authors and publishers frequently delineated audience composition in prefatory remarks. They consistently reminded readers of the two groups for whom their books were intended: experts (doctors, lawyers, judges, and scholars) and lay people. Reaffirming bourgeois status, authors carefully maintained that this lay reader was not a member of the general public, but rather part of a group of well-educated and "well-defined persons seriously interested in moral-historical examination" (*Lasters* n. p.) and thus involved in educational and self-bettering pursuits. Accordingly, these individuals were able to acknowledge the scholarly worth in illustrations of sexual matters, appreciate their documentary and aesthetic value, and appropriately enjoy the educational experience of the texts. Many books, including Fuchs's *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst*, also included printed admonitions stating, for example, that the book "should only be sold to scholars, collectors, and libraries."³³ These clear demonstrations further functioned to reaffirm to purchasers the exclusive and elevated nature of their pursuits. They acted as self-reflexive reminders of the realm in which such socially accepted activities took place.

Selectivity of readership was afforded not only by educational and gendered privilege, but also economic advantage. Only wealthy bibliophiles, professionals, or art lovers could afford Curt Moreck's three-volume publication, which, even covered in linen, was seventy-five marks.³⁴ While not as expensive as fine art portfolios, the books were more expensive than much of the popular literature fi-

nancially available to the general public. Such parameters served as socially and economically restrictive means for producers and consumers to regulate access to the 1920s *Sittengeschichten*.

What these physical and mental barriers preserve is the bourgeois realm of *Bildung* and its associations of social, cultural, and personal betterment. The experience of the books, however, surpassed that proposed in Diderot's *Encyclopédie*—they invoke a far greater bodily desire to read, see, and feel more. Here, the effort at *Aufklärung* borders on a perverse visual activation not appropriate for the general public. And yet by the mid-1920s, sexual education was not the sole privilege of the German bourgeoisie. From the illustrated marriage manuals of Theodoor Van de Velde to the *Aufklärungsfilme* (sex education films) of the First World War, the Weimar citizen had been introduced visually to the importance of good hygiene and healthy sexual practice.³⁵ While nineteenth-century pictorializations of syphilis, for example, were restricted to medical texts or allegorical art images, the twentieth century ushered in franker demonstrations of the dangers of unclean sexual practices and dubious partners.³⁶ Furthermore, these modern representations were intended for the general public and not a specialized audience of doctors. Many *Sittengeschichten* also partook of this trend, representing a popularized version of sexological knowledge: the concentration on sexual vice in the *Sittengeschichte des Lasters* acted as a warning against deviant sexual practice, and the visual representations of sexual disease in the three-volume *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik* (fig. 9) and the compact *Liebeslexikon von A-Z* (*Lexicon of Love from A-Z*), made clear the benefits of sexual hygiene and “the poison of love” (fig. 10). Other publications, like *Gefilde der Lust* and *Flucht aus der Ehe*, imparted important information on sexual health. The supplement to the latter, in fact, acted as an illustrated sex manual (“*ein aufklärender Bildatlas*”), demonstrating the latest scientific knowledge as well as helpful physical exercises to maintain sexual health. As the editors of the *Liebeslexikon von A-Z* explained it, these books were conceived to provide needed and reliable information in the face of the sexual unknown:

So long as people stay people, love will signify an adventurous and dangerous trip in wild, unknown seas. . . . Whoever however ventures the trip in the dark with the *Liebeslexikon* as a true helper and adviser will undertake it not in a delicate nutshell but in a firm, seaworthy boat with a good rudder and a

reliable compass, which surely transports him to the shore of good fortune. (n. p.)

To ensure that good fortune, the *Liebeslexikon* even included a form to return to Vienna's Institut für Sexualforschung in which readers could address specific, personal questions and receive a professional response.

Given their common popularized content, then, we must ask what aspect of these books was dangerous enough that they had to be guarded from the general public? What about the *Sittengeschichten* was so volatile that they could only be viewed among the most exclusive educated, monied, and gendered audiences? The danger can be found in the difference between Theodoor Van de Velde's illustrations and those of Alfred Kind. While both purport to demonstrate important aspects of sexual knowledge with their illustrations, in the *Sittengeschichte* the informative and the imaginative merge to invoke a subjective experience in the reading audience. Within the act of reading these books, that personal and private mental activity is transformed physically through an intensification of sensorial activation to become a bodily one. While scrutiny of images of naked women may have been located superficially in the scientific, the eroticization of the senses introduced by such apparatus as the moving dance figure cards, three-dimensional glasses, or phonograph records blurs the mental and physical distinction of these visual phenomena. The experience of the male bourgeois German reader invoked an intense scopophilic desire, confusing subjective contemplation and intellectual desire. The danger of the *Sittengeschichten*, then, lies in the erotic power of their imagery and their potential to disrupt powerfully the order of *Bildung* at the same time that they function to preserve it.

As a final attempt to limit the experience of these images, we might reconsider the numerous illustrations of sexual disease in these books. While superficially falling into the same category as body tattoos or port-city activities (categories of experience outside the appropriate realm of the German male bourgeois), images of disease-ridden flesh and pale, ghostly visages abruptly rupture the visual pleasure and subjective contemplation inherent in their reading experience.³⁷ The graphic images function as literal warnings of physical disease. They also stand as psychological ones to the reader/viewer, vividly picturing the danger of becoming too carried away by the experience and thus moving outside the appropriate, schol-

arly bourgeois realm. In this way, the presence of these images acts like Barrias's *Nature Unveiling Herself to Science*, so commonly exhibited in nineteenth-century medical schools: they function as visual reminders of the benefits of intense visual investigation contained, and at the same time carefully protected, within the scholarly sphere.

Conclusion

Within the space of educational curiosity and investigative desire, visual images had the potential to clarify the unknown for bourgeois German readers in a powerfully physical way. Located within comprehensive, historical studies of scientific methodology, pictures lent to texts an immediately edifying and engaging presence. Illustrations possessed the power to invoke in reader/viewers both scholarly inquiry and scopophilic desire to see and learn more. In the service of moral-historical and sexual studies, visual images held an even greater power to harness vision in the "lustful passion for clarification." Authors and publishers consistently purified this perverse threat through reaffirmations of scientific worth and delimitations of public availability. The contentious nature of sexually explicit or evocative imagery was domesticated by its bourgeois association with *Bildung* and the aesthetic and cultural qualities readers believed were embodied in the images.

In a process that promised bourgeois audiences intellectual as well as personal and cultural betterment, the moral order of *Bildung* stood in direct confrontation to the divisive role played by the experience of sexual imagery. Efforts to prevent the possible danger embedded in the images focused on audience restriction—through the physical format of books (which required private experience) or price and gender limitations. While these barriers exhibit implicit ironies (as in the legal ruling that prohibited women from reading Fuchs's *Sittengeschichten*, despite the fact that in almost all cases the subject of the illustrations was female), one of the most hypocritical was that of education.³⁸ Authors and publishers consistently affirmed the context in which these books were used and the trained and restrained eye needed for the process. But while invoking this shield of scientific and educational clarification, images participated in an eroticization of the educational sphere that could only be associated with visual and bodily pleasure.

Though written approximately thirty years before Hirschfeld's or Moreck's moral-historical publications, Frank Wedekind's

Frühlings Erwachen (*Spring Awakening*) of 1891 makes vividly clear the role of sexual imagery, its dangerous visual experience, and the hypocrisy it reveals about *Bildung* and bourgeois morality. Focusing on the process of *Verbürgerlichung* for a group of children as they struggle within the bourgeois system, the play dramatizes the moral struggle toward self-betterment invoked in the process of *Bildung* when the children are faced with the sexual urges of puberty. This socialization process has parallels with the reader's experience of sexual imagery in the educational context of the *Sittengeschichte*. In Wedekind's play, we watch as the children grapple with the controlled bourgeois world of morality and the mind, and the youthful sphere of sexual desire and the body. In this regard, the two moments in the play in which sexual imagery appears in the realm of *Bildung* are especially insightful for the present discussion.

Early in the play we are introduced to Melchior and Moritz, friends who confide in each other their growing sexual curiosity. Lamenting over the unwieldy desire to know, Moritz states that his urges prevent him from properly attending to the requirements of school and family; uncontrolled sexuality, in a sense, obstructs his entry into bourgeois order. After looking for acceptable answers within that order itself, he begs his friend for help:

Moritz. I've been through the encyclopedia from A to Z. Huge, ponderous volumes, solid with words. Masses and masses and masses of words. But not one plain description of what actually goes on. It's a weird feeling of—shame. What's the point of an encyclopedia that gives you the answers to everything—except the most basic question of life.

Melchior. You've seen two dogs in the street? (1.2)

Disgusted by such a base example, Moritz implores his friend to write out the information as clearly as possible and to slip it into his books (thus moving the information back into the realm of bourgeois order and propriety). In that context, his "poor, weary eyes won't be able to avoid giving it a glance," especially with the "marginal illustrations" that he entrusts Melchior to provide. It is this information—and especially the illustrations—which brings ruinous consequences at the end of the play. Following Moritz's suicide, Melchior is brought before school authorities to answer for

the sexual diagrams. Not allowed to explain himself (and thus disrupt moral order again), Melchior is told the images are "obscene," and the cause of unrespectable, unrestrained, and immoral acts. The teacher Sonnenstich makes clear the divisive and dangerous position held by illustration in the text:

The document in question comprises a twenty-page discourse entitled "Sexual Reproduction." It is cast in the form of a philosophical dialogue, in the manner of Plato, and is embellished throughout with almost life-size drawings illustrating the most revolting obscenities, utterly shameless material that would satisfy, one imagines, the basest prurient appetites of the most degenerate, debauched, bestial pervert. . . . (3.1)

When Melchior objects to the charges, having "written nothing but the simple straightforward facts, familiar to . . . every adult," Sonnenstich refuses to admit to such truths. He believes that by including such imagery and exposing the privately guarded, Melchior has shown "little respect for the dignity of . . . our educational system [and] . . . for those instincts of modesty and decorum that are rooted in the moral code of the world." Sexual knowledge in the hands of the uneducated and untrained, then, is a dangerous thing, and visual imagery encourages physical and moral degeneracy. Melchior's greatest sin comes in the form of speaking the truth, and wishing to break its confinement in the regulated moral world of the adult.

While sexual imagery was relegated to the realm of the bourgeois adult and its presence justified by the appropriate manner in which it was experienced, the irony of its context is represented in another moment of the play: the masturbation scene of Rilow. Alone in a lavatory, the young boy engages in a private encounter with a secreted reproduction of *Venus* by Palma Vecchio. As he readies to dispose of the image, he recalls the "many beauties" that came before his *Venus*—all reproductions of fine art made by famous and well-respected artists. While another example of the untrained eye's perverse use of visual imagery, the scene also reveals the hypocrisy of bourgeois morality when we learn from Rilow the source of his beauties:

Then that *Amor* by Bougereau. *Ada* by J. van Beers—the very *Ada* I had to abduct from the secret drawer in my father's desk,

to add to my harem. And that shuddering, ecstatic *Leda* by Makart. She fell out from my brother's college notes when I was inspecting his progress. (2.3)

The sublimation of these images within the realm of *Bildung* (represented by the secret desk drawer and the stack of school notes) parallels the erotic level of experience in the *Sittengeschichte* that is protected by the shield of education and culture. Rilow's scene suggests that even within bourgeois moral order the trained and educated use of the erotic was tied to a personal and perverse visual experience.

Wedekind's critique of the ironic state of bourgeois moral order becomes apparent when we compare these two scenes. Even with associations of education or culture, sexual imagery was not to be shared unless it was among like-minded, educated, and appreciative people. Within this highly guarded sphere, its undeniable visual and physical power to engage willingly overrode educational motives. Wedekind's hope was to expose the hypocrisy of this bourgeois standard to audiences who protected this culture—the same that purchased erotic print portfolios or read *Sittengeschichten*. Protective of its secretive and powerful place in society, it is no wonder that the bourgeois order objected to the play and prevented its performance until fifteen years after it had been written.³⁹ Rather than confront the hypocrisy of their moral order, bourgeois audiences preferred to ignore inequities and carefully preserve its lustful passion for clarification.

Notes

All translations are by the author unless otherwise noted.

1. Barbara Maria Stafford has written at length on the use of illustration, its application in education, and visual participation in the period of the Enlightenment; see *Body Criticism*, *Artful Science*, and most recently, *Good Looking*.

2. Realizing the power inherent in illustration for this purpose, D'Alembert explained in his *Discourse* that while the editors did not want to mimic the person who sets up signposts at each step for fear of getting lost, they did place illustrations "at every point where travelers would be in danger of losing their way." See D'Alembert 126.

3. For a careful discussion of this sense of the term, see Bruford and also Dumont.
4. Grosz was brought up on charges of (sexual) obscenity for his 1922 portfolio, *Ecce Homo*. In fact, the works of many artists, such as Franz Christopher, Franz Masereel, Otto Schoff, Georg Scholtz, and Heinrich Zille, who were charged by reason of an offense against §184 of the German penal code, were frequently used for illustrating various *Sittengeschichten* during the Weimar Republic. For more on the history of obscenity trials in the German modernist period, see D'Alessandro, Hütt, and Liess.
5. My initial description of this publication history is confined to books published with the term "*Sittengeschichte*" in the title.
6. *Das Weib* was first published in 1885 by Th. Grieben's press in Leipzig; it subsequently went through eleven editions in Germany, the final one published in 1927. Paula Weideger has written a brief history of *Das Weib*, as well as a feminist inquiry into the permutations of the original text in various editions (although the exact dating of these changes appears to be incorrect) and the motivations and concerns of its subsequent editors. See Weideger, 13-34. For a critique of Weideger in an expanded agenda for cultural history, see Jordanova 10-11.
7. Ploß died in 1885, never to see the popularity of his book for himself. For more on the succession of editors, see Weideger 15-18.
8. This image takes part in the convention of scientific exploration of the body most vividly represented by the popular Italian eighteenth-century wax anatomical models known as "Venuses." Jordanova has described these models as lying "on silk or velvet cushions, in passive, yet sexually inviting poses." Many of the models have long flowing hair, necklaces, and removable parts that facilitate manual exploration. The careful emphasis on tactile qualities and physical pose, not to mention that they are named after the goddess of love, certainly suggests an expanded subjective scientific intent for their observers and users. See Jordanova 43-65.
9. Barrias first exhibited a version of the sculpture in the Salon of 1893, under the title *Mysterious and Veiled, Nature Uncovers Herself before Science*; a subsequent version of the sculpture was exhibited in the Salon of 1899. Various versions of the sculpture exist, in bronze and marble, and decorated with such details as gilt-edged veils and jeweled scarab dress closures.
10. In 1899 a version was made for the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers; in 1902 a marble version of the sculpture was purchased by the École de Médecine and exhibited in its halls. For a critical discussion of the meaning of the sculpture in nineteenth-century science, see Jordanova 87-

110. Such “object lessons” are not new to the Barrias sculpture: perhaps one of the most famous connections of art and science was instituted by Jean-Martin Charcot in the halls of the female psychiatric ward in Paris, the Salpêtrière. The exhibited lithographic, photographic, and painted images of patients under observation were lessons not only to the medical staff who worked there, but also to the patients whose neuroses fell into the iconographic stages exemplified in the images. For more on Charcot’s role in nineteenth-century medicine and visual imagery, see Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, esp. 20-24, and Showalter 145-64.

11. This kind of “safe” viewing is also involved in many artworks produced during the Weimar Republic that have as their subjects sensational, violent, or sexual events. For example, in Otto Dix’s 1922 watercolor, *Lustmord (Sex Murder)*, the bourgeois viewer/owner of the image is allowed entry into and visual pleasure from the scopophilic opportunities of the composition, style, and image. Yet, given the scene’s location in a lower-class room or *Absteigequartier* (cheap hotel room), the viewer’s looking and experiencing is held back and thus pleasure is protected. For more on the watercolor and this viewing process, see Heller 171.

12. Such a choice may also be determined by the idea that realistic drawings would be too graphic or disruptive for scholarly musings.

13. For example, in a volume of the *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik*, a drawing of the tattooed lower body and genital area of a woman from the Pelau Islands is noted as a reproduction from the eleventh edition of *Das Weib*. See *Bilder-Lexikon* 1: 826 and 934.

14. For more on Eugen Holländer’s place within the history of illustrated medical histories as well as his particular use of illustration, see Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness* 29-31.

15. As further evidence of the practice of delineation, definition, and standardization of the oft-seen introduced in *Das Weib*, many of the illustrations in *Venus und Äskulap* were also reprinted in later *Sittengeschichten*, such as the *Bilder-Lexikon*.

16. For information on Fuchs, see Benjamin 225-53; see also Weitz 296-302.

17. His publication list includes *Achtzehnhundertachtundvierzig in der Karikatur (1848 In Caricature)*, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker (The Caricature of the European Peoples)* of 1901, *Die Frau in der Karikatur (The Woman in Cariture)* of 1906, *Richard Wagner in der Karikatur (Richard Wagner In Caricature)* of 1907, *Die Weiberherrschaft in der Geschichte der Menschheit (Petticoat Rule in the History of Mankind)* of 1913, and *Die Juden in der Karikatur (The Jews in Caricature)* of 1921.

18. According to George Grosz, an acquaintance of Fuchs while both lived in Berlin, the author believed that "eroticism was the mainspring of social progress, which made him a kind of democrat carrying Cupid's bow" (Grosz 151).

19. There is some discrepancy concerning prices for each edition. My understanding of prices has been formed according to the information listed for Fuchs's book in the 1915-1920 records of the *Deutsches Bücherverzeichnis* (hereafter "DBV") 4: 832. For a discussion of the range of prices (slightly different from mine) and editions for the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, see Weitz 300. Regardless of the variance of prices, it is safe to say that they were prohibitive, except for those of the *Bildungsbürgertum*.

20. The term is often used to designate the mid-1920s period of financial prosperity and sustained cultural output. See, for example, Willett, and also Schrader and Schebera. In the context of promising financial, cultural, and educational fronts, my use of the term could also be considered ironic in light of the careful limitation of many artworks and literary publications from the uneducated masses.

21. While my initial description of the history of this genre was shaped by publications identified as "*Sittengeschichte*" in their titles, certainly many more publications could be considered as such, especially if their subject includes sexual or moral customs. Many of these books can be associated with the rising popular interest in sexual practice and hygiene.

22. See DBV 16: 972. Before the war, publications such as Fuchs's (those both titled or categorized as *Sittengeschichten*) could be found under the heading for "*Sitte und Gebräuche*." It was not until the 1921-1925 issue of the DBV that "*Sittengeschichte*" was even seen—and here only following *Sitte und Gebräuche*, as a secondary heading with "*Kulturgeschichte*" (history of culture) (11: 913).

23. As discussed in the previous section, sexual customs and rituals were always included to some extent in the early *Sittengeschichten*. The popularity of these studies in the 1920s, however, corresponded to the expanded scope on issues of sex and the erotic. The 1926-1931 heading, in fact, included such associated topics as "*Galante Zeit*" (amorous times), "*Geschlechtsleben (Abnormalen)*" (sex life [abnormalities]), "*Hochzeit([s-] Bräuche)*" (wedding [wedding practices]), "*Laster*" (vice), and "*Weib (Kind, Weiberherrschaft)*" (woman [child, female domination]), as well as the more expected associations of "*Kultur*" (culture), "*Feste u. Feiern*" (festivals and celebrations), and "*Studenten*" (students) (DBV 16: 972).

24. Curt Moreck was the pseudonym used by Konrad Haemmerling (1888-?) as the author of numerous *Sittengeschichten*; one can only speculate that under the threat of official action he chose to pen his books under a false

name. Hans Ostwald (1873-1940) was the author of such illustrated publications as *Die Berlinerin: Kultur- und Sittengeschichte Berlins* of 1910; *Kultur- und Sittengeschichte Berlins* of 1924; *Sittengeschichte Berlins* (n.d.), and *Sittengeschichte der Inflation: Ein Kulturdokument aus den Jahren des Marktsturzes* of 1931. Many of Ostwald's books were printed in many editions during the Weimar Republic.

25. One reason for a lack of direct connection between text and image was given by Curt Moreck, who stated that in some cases national character prevented artists from producing representations of specific subjects. The author cited "American and English prudery" as the reason for the dearth of images on prostitution in his work (2: 412).

26. Authors and publishers commonly described illustrations in this manner. In the Austrian capital, Vienna's Institut für Sexualforschung was likewise associated with the production of numerous *Sittengeschichten*, both through the loan of illustrations and the contributions of staff. Many of these books, like the *Bilder-Lexikon*, were published under the auspices of the Verlag für Kulturforschung (Press for Culture Investigation).

27. See Moreck 2: 413-20.

28. The series included ten books published between 1926 and 1930, each meeting the standards of historical, and at times geographic, breadth in their academic, illustrated texts. Each of the books, edited by Leo Schidrowitz, was written by a number of authors who were experts on the subjects about which they wrote. Following the continually expanding scope of the sexually oft-seen, the books had as subjects the moral history of Paris, proletariats, intimate things, seaports and travel, vice, theater, caress and punishment, most intimate things, revolution, and the secret and forbidden.

29. Iser's phenomenological approach to reader-response theory is especially useful in theorizing the expanding role of the *Sittengeschichte* reader. He has written that "[a] literary text must . . . be conceived in such a way that it will engage the reader's imagination in the task of working things out for himself, for reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative." See Iser, especially 277-94. Concretization is a term also used by Ingarden (49).

30. Since more contemporary or direct photographs might have appeared too real or "lowbrow," these efforts helped to distinguish the publications as tasteful and appropriate to their setting.

31. The first record contains an original erotic song of the Motu (Papua, New Guinea), the second records the "music of famous erotic dances (known as 'Belly Dances')," the third features an Alpine folk song from Austria, and the final record plays a modern, flirtatious song. For more on the contents of the phonograph records, see *Die fünf Sinne* 3: 227-28.

32. The phantasmagoria was a particular kind of public performance that employed the use of a magic lantern. Popular in the late eighteenth century, it used back projection as a means of illusionistic performance. See Crary 132, and also Stafford, *Artful Science* 14-16 and 74-76.

33. See title page to Fuchs, *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst*. The designation, especially of collectors in the above warning, is noteworthy as the physical nature of these books—their encyclopedic scope, their luxurious bindings in leather, suede, and decorated linen, their heavy paper, their colored and carefully printed illustrations, not to mention the occasional inclusion of actual fine art prints—appealed to both collectors of books as well as fine art.

34. See *DBV* 16: 973.

35. Van de Velde wrote numerous books on marriage, some with colored diagrams and charts, but none illustrated in the same manner as Hirschfeld's *Sittengeschichten*, for example. Among his most popular studies were *Die vollkommene Ehe: Eine Studie über ihre Physiologie und Technik (Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique)*; *Die Abniegung in der Ehe: Eine Studie über ihre Entstehung und Bekämpfung (Sexual Tensions in Marriage: Their Origin, Prevention, and Treatment)*; *Die Fruchtbarkeit in der Ehe: Ihre Wunschgemasse Beeinflussung (Fertility and Sterility in Marriage: Their Voluntary Promotion and Limitation)* (all published in 1926); *Die Erotik in der Ehe: Ihre ausschlaggebende Bedeutung (Eroticism in Marriage: Its Decisive Meaning)* of 1928; *Der Ehespiegel: Ein Bilderbuch mit textlichen Erläuterungen und Betrachtungen (The Mirror of Marriage: A Picture Book with Textual Explanations and Examinations)* of 1929; and *Ehe-tauglich oder Ehe-untauglich?* of 1930. As proof of public interest in marriage and sex manuals at this time, Van de Velde's works were frequently printed in new editions as well as translated into other languages.

36. Visual images of sexual disease in the nineteenth century were limited to such publications as Byron Bramwell's *Atlas of Clinical Medicine* (Edinburgh, 1894) and intended to impart medical knowledge; other representations often took the form of allegorical images like Paul Grabwinkler's *Der ewige Geiger (The Eternal Violinist)* or Felicien Rops's *Mors syphilitica*. While allegorical references to syphilis continued in the work of twentieth-century artists like Dix and Grosz, for example, more "objective" representations also appeared in public circulation. The franker representation of syphilis in the twentieth century is due to such events as the perceived need for sexual education of soldiers and the public during World War I, the sexual emancipation of women, and the new treatments for such diseases developed at this time. For more on the visualization of syphilis, see Gilman, *Disease and Representation* 248-56 and *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik* 5: 309-28. For an intriguing view of how the danger of syphilis heightened the

visual experience of it (thus echoing my contention of sexual disease as another oft-seen frontier), see Theweleit 2: 40-42.

37. As a collector of both books and fine artworks, Sigmund Freud was sensitive to the process of visual enchantment. He wrote in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* that “[v]isual impressions remain the most frequent pathway along which libidinal excitation is aroused. . . . It is normal for most people to linger to some extent over the intermediate sexual aim of a looking that has a sexual tinge to it; indeed, this offers them a possibility of directing some proportion of their libido on to higher artistic aims” (23). This visual pleasure, stated Freud, can be destroyed through two paths: perversions (voyeurism or exhibitionism, for example) or shame (the process of rupture I believe is involved in the profusion of disease imagery found in these books). Opposing scopophilia, shame is the moral sense which has the ability to override pleasure.

38. For more information on the legal case against Fuchs, see Weitz 300.

39. Though written in 1891, *Frühlings Erwachen* was not presented on stage until 1906, when Max Reinhardt produced a heavily censored version in Berlin. Before that time, the play was only known to a small literary audience. For more on the censorship history of the play, see Jelavich.

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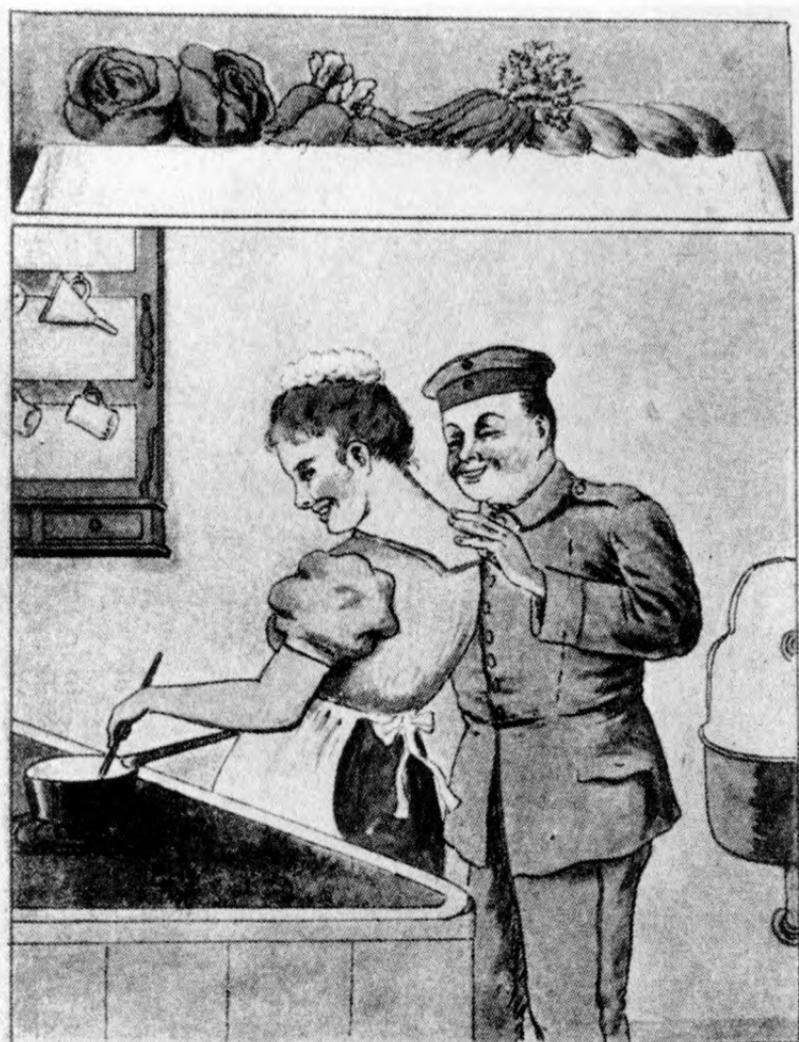
Photograph Captions

- Fig. 1. George Grosz, *Walzertraum*, watercolor, 1921, from the portfolio *Ecce Homo*, 1922-23, reproduced as *Strichdirnen* in the *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik*, ed. Institut für Sexualforschung, vol. 3 (Vienna: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1930). © Estate of George Grosz/licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.
- Fig. 2. Mass-produced wartime postcard, reproduced in Magnus Hirschfeld, *Sittengeschichte des Weltkrieges* (Leipzig: Verlag für Sexualwissenschaft Schneider & Co., 1930).
- Fig. 3. Documentary photograph of a wartime eunuch, reproduced in *Sittengeschichte des Weltkrieges*.
- Fig. 4. Egon Schiele, *Moderner Akt*, 1918, drawing, reproduced in *Sittengeschichte des Weltkrieges*.
- Fig. 5. Viktor Levder (?), cover illustration for the *Beilagenwerk zur Sittengeschichte des Theaters* from *Sittengeschichte des Theaters: Eine Darstellung des Theaters, seiner Entwicklung und Stellung in zwei Jahrtausenden*, ed. Leo Schidrowitz (Vienna: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1926).

- Fig. 6. Artist unknown, *Die Zote*, watercolor, n.d., from the *Beilagenwerk zur Sittengeschichte des Theaters*.
- Fig. 7. Artist unknown, *Jedermanns Theater*, watercolor, n.d., from the *Beilagenwerk zur Sittengeschichte des Theaters*.
- Fig. 8. Artist unknown, moving dance figure card and viewing device from the *Beilagenwerk zur Sittengeschichte von Paris* from *Sittengeschichte von Paris: Die Grosstadt, ihre Sitten und ihre Unsittlichkeit*, ed. Leo Schidrowitz (Vienna: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1926).
- Fig. 9. Variations of syphilitic chancres reproduced in the *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik*, ed. Institut für Sexuallforschung, vol. 3 (Vienna: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1930). Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library.
- Fig. 10. *Das Gift der Liebe*, photographic frontispiece for the chapter on sexual diseases in *Liebeslexikon von A-Z: Ein Aufklärungsbuch und Ratgeber für alle Fragen der Liebe*, ed. Hannelore von Palkow and André Marchand (Vienna: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1932).

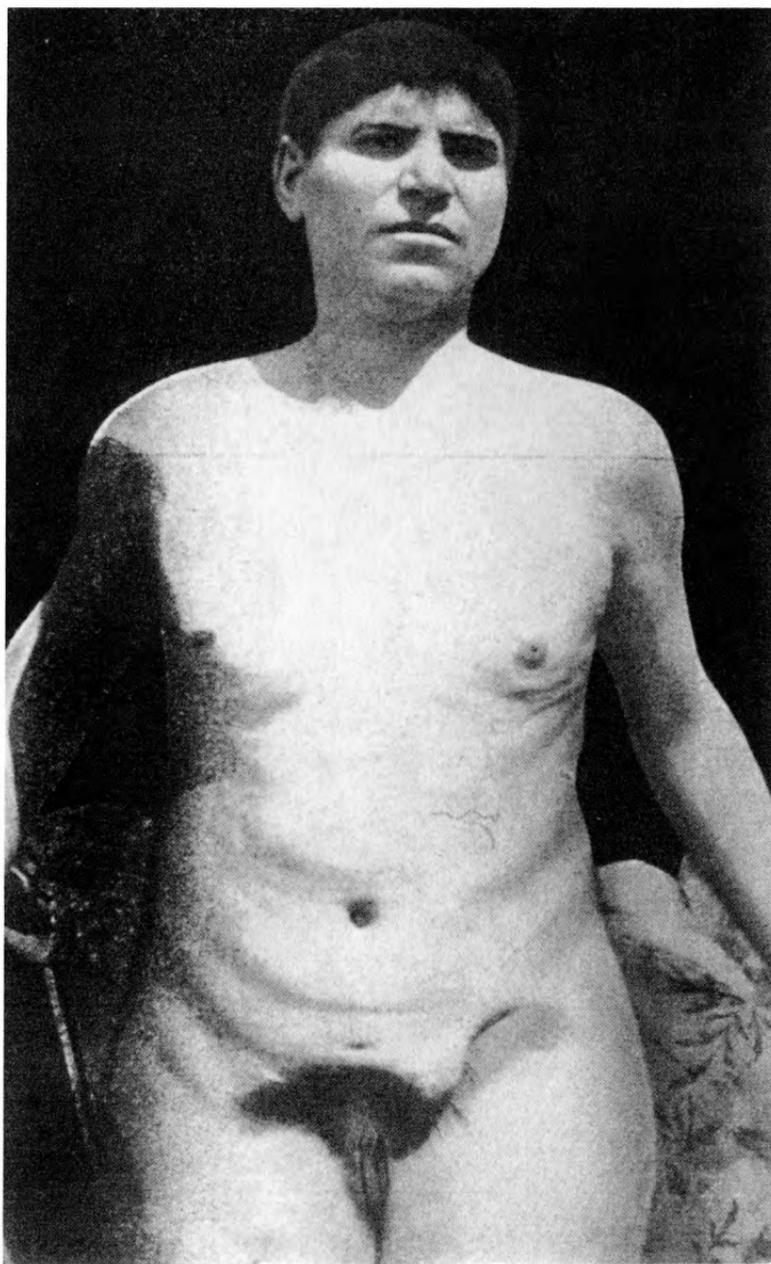


Fig. 1



**Pst ! August, Hand weg,
heute ist fleischloser Tag !**

Fig. 2



Ein Kriegseunuch

Fig. 3

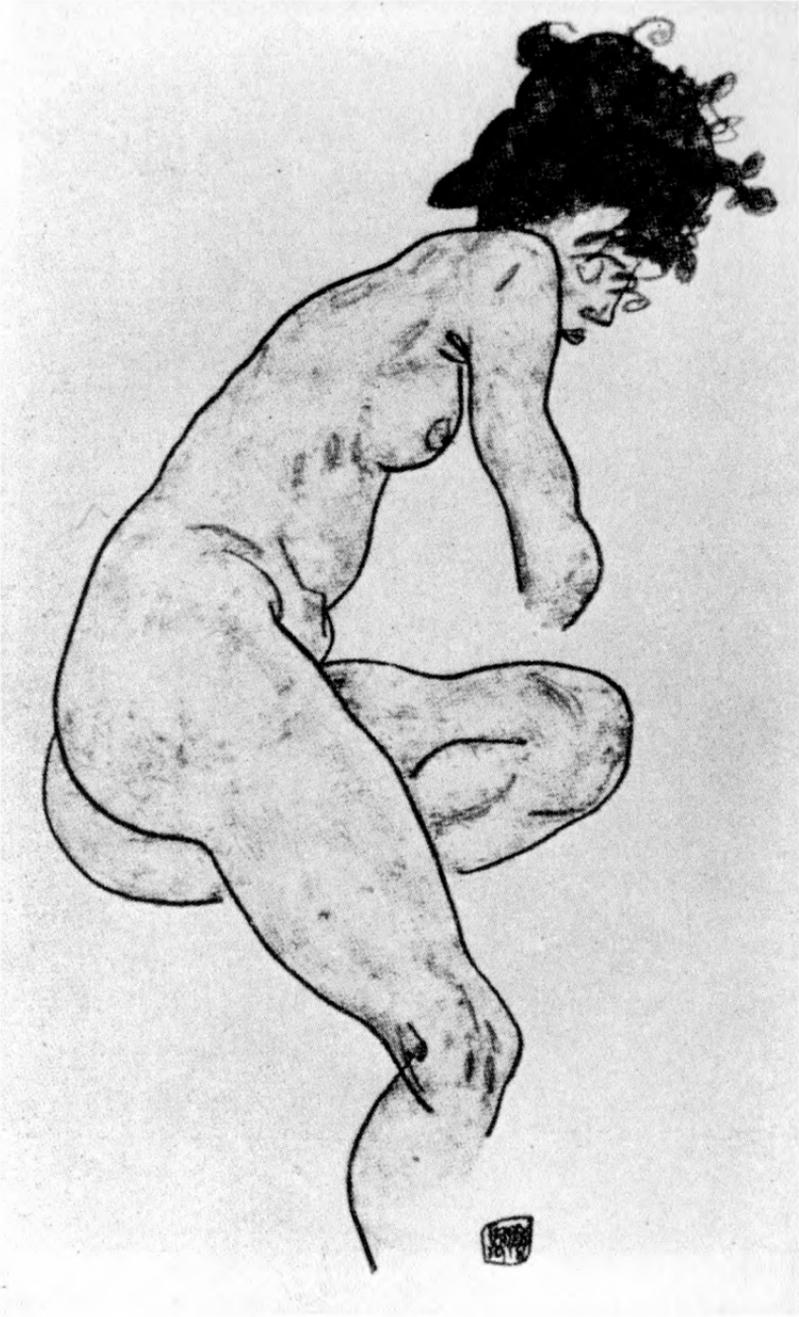


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

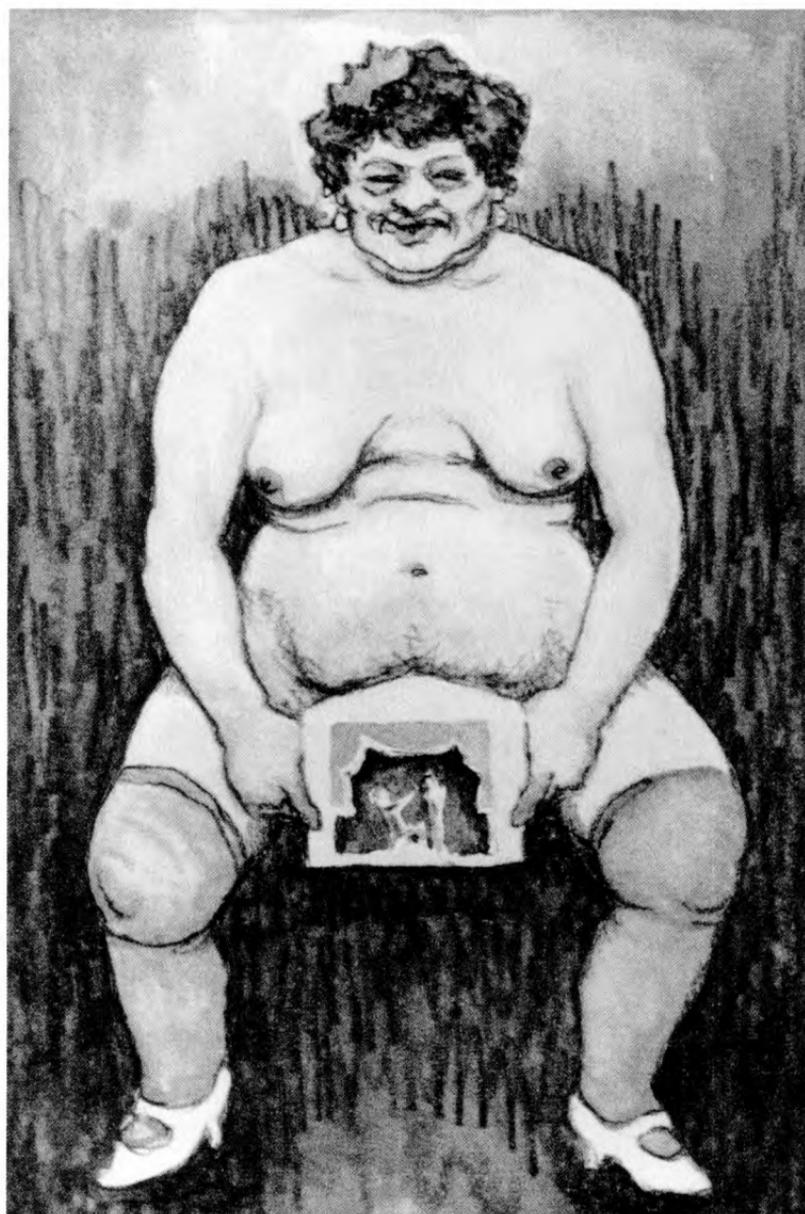


Fig. 7

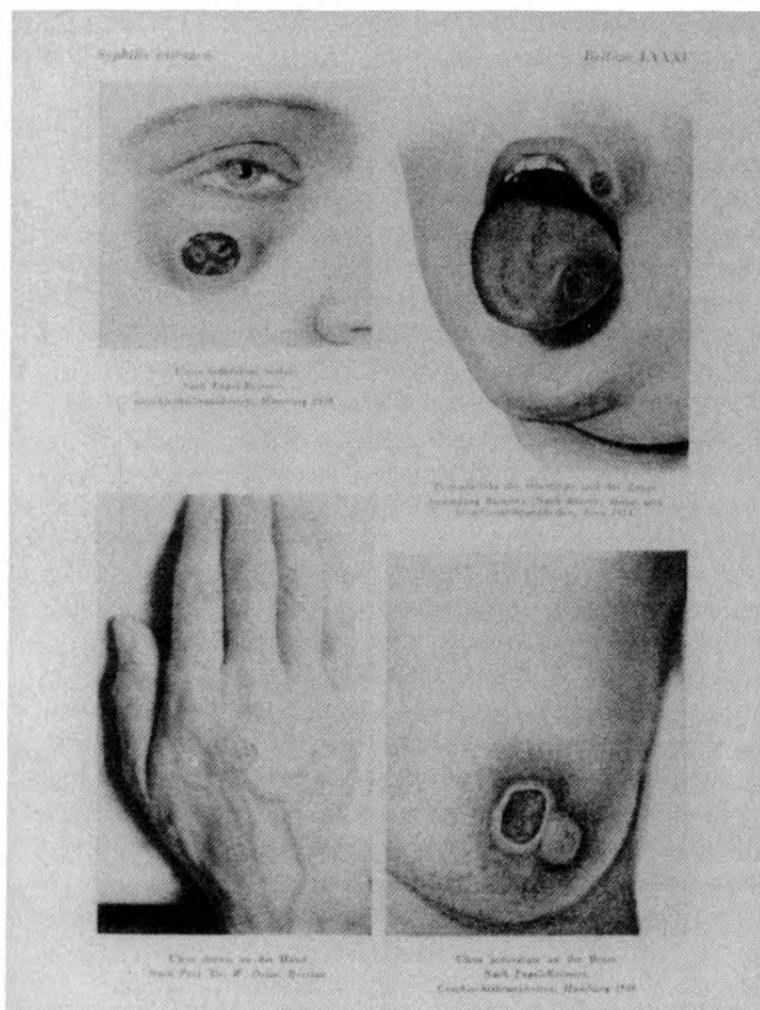


Fig. 9

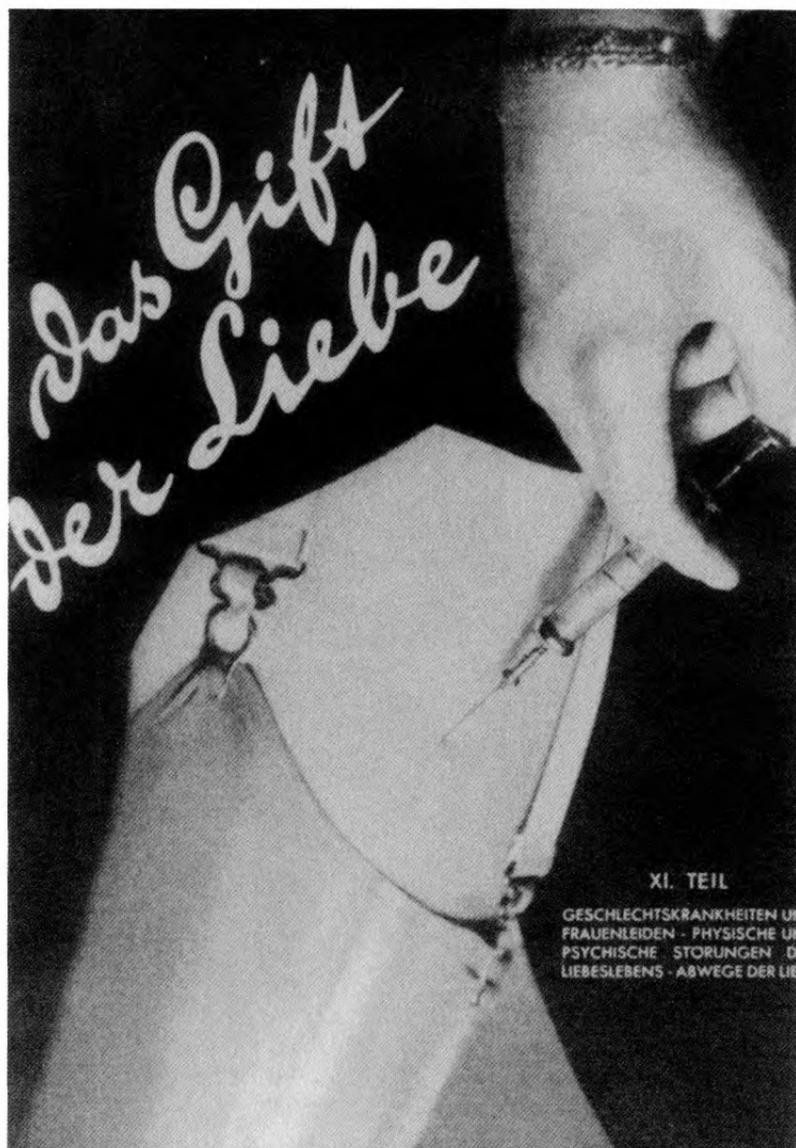


Fig. 10