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Fall 2007

The German Discovery of Sex (Fall 2007) (Whitman College)

Robert D. Tobin

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WHITMAN COLLEGE

World Literature 387B: The German Discovery of Sex

Fall 2007

Few people realize that the Greek term "homo" (same) and the Latin "sex" (sex) were first combined to describe someone with a sexual interest in members of their own sex in 1869 in the German-speaking world. Similar observations can be made about terms such as "heterosexual," "masochist," and "transvestite." There was apparently an intense interest in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German-speaking central Europe in reconfiguring and reconsidering sexuality. Out of this interest emerged sexologists such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing, whose Psychopathia Sexualis introduced a new vocabulary of sexuality to the entire world, homosexual activists such as Karl Ulrichs, who made arguments about sexual rights that are still prevalent in the gay community today, and Sigmund Freud, whose understanding of sexuality arguably structured much of twentieth century popular culture.

In this course, we will use the tools of literary and cultural analysis, studying fictional, political, psychoanalytic and scientific works to investigate the emergence of modern sexual discourses in the German-speaking world.

Grading

2 five-page papers	30%
1 ten-page paper	30%
1 class report	10%
class participation	30%

Syllabus

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION TO GERMAN SEXUALITY

Aug. 29 Introduction

Sept. 3 Wedekind, Spring's Awakening

Sept. 5 Wedekind, Spring's Awakening

SECTION II: FEMALE SEXUALITY AND HYSTERIA

Sept. 10 Freud, Dora

Sept. 12 Freud, Dora

Sept. 17 Canetti, "The Ogre" (hand out)

Sept. 19 possibly: Schönberg's Erwartung (maybe we watch or listen to the opera together)

Sept. 24 Schnitzler, Fräulein Else

Sept. 26 Schnitzler, Fräulein Else

Oct. 1 Weininger, excerpts

Oct. 3 Weininger, excerpts

paper 1 due: 5 pages on female sexuality

SECTION III: HOMOSEXUALITY AND TRANSSEXUALITY

Oct 10 Sodomites and Urnings, readings

Oct. 15 Sodomites and Urnings, readings (also from Tobin)

Oct. 17 Duc, Are They Women? (hand outs)

Oct. 22 Mann, Death in Venice

Oct. 24 Mann, Death in Venice (Tobin chapter)

Oct. 29 N. O. Body, Memoirs of a Man's Maiden Years

Oct. 31 N. O. Body, Memoirs of a Man's Maiden Years

paper 2 due: 5 pages on homosexuality and/or transsexuality

SECTION IV POWER AND SEX

Nov. 5 Class Cancelled (Tobin giving lecture on German sex in New York)

Nov. 7 Sacher-Masoch, Venus in Furs

Nov. 12 Sacher-Masoch, Venus in Furs (Tobin chapter)

Nov. 14 Krafft-Ebing, masochism case studies

SECTION V THEORY

Nov. 26 Foucault, History of Sexuality

Nov. 28 Foucault, History of Sexuality

Dec. 3 Sexual Radicals: Marcuse, etc. (hand-outs)

Dec. 5 Conclusion

final paper due: 10 pages on the history of sexuality

World Literature 387, "The German Discovery of Sex"
Professor Robert Tobin

Enrollment: currently 16, might grow to 20 or so.

Frank Wedekind, Spring's Awakening, ed. Eric Bentley.
Applause Books 2000.
ISBN: 1557832455

Sigmund Freud, Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria,
Touchstone 1997
ISBN: 0684829460

Arthur Schnitzler, Desire and Delusion: Three Novellas
Ivan R. Dee 2004
ISBN: 1566636035

Otto Weininger, Sex and Character
The Indiana University Press translation

Sodomites and Urnings: Homosexual Representations in Classic German Journals,
ed. By Michael Lombardi-Nash
Haworth Press, 2007
ISBN: 978-1-56023-699-3

Thomas Mann, Death in Venice, trans. David Luke, ed. Naomi Ritter
Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism
Bedford St. Martins 1998
ISBN: 0312120028

N.O. Body, Memoirs of a Man's Maiden Years, trans. Deborah Simon, preface by
Sander Gilman
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005
ISBN 978-0-8122-3908-9

Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Venus in Furs, trans. Joachim Neugroschel
Penguin 2000
ISBN: 0140447814

Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality: An Introduction. Volume 1
Vintage 1990
0679724699

+ Recommended:

Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Psychopathia Sexualis
Kessing, 2006
ISBN: 1428653880