WEST GERMAN WOMEN & POSTWAR CULTURE:
A SURVEY OF FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVES

Laura Kaiser Paré

In a 1984 *New York Times* news analysis, Petra Kelly, a leader of the West German Green Party, was quoted as saying that, "the Marshall Plan was a swindle designed to place Konrad Adenauer in power and turn Germans from forming a noble society and toward addiction to consuming and possessing."[1] Twenty years later, an American journalist writing for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* quoted a young German woman complaining that she felt "'totally Americanized,' as though she had been robbed of her natural culture in the crib."[2] These statements represent two points on the spectrum of public opinion about the role of Americanization in postwar Germany. Despite a great deal of scholarly debate on Americanization in Europe, with West Germany as its poster child, it is rare to encounter first person voices, especially those of women. While America's political and economic influence on West German lives can be documented by measuring specific outcomes, cultural reception remains more opaque. Particularly, little has been written about how German women received and appropriated American culture in the 1950s and beyond.[3] Cinema attendance and record

[1] John Vinocur, "Europe's Intellectuals and American Power," *New York Times*, April 29, 1984.

[2] Eric T. Hansen, "Typisch deutsch; Die gefühlte Amerikanisierung," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 13, 2004.

[3] Kaspar Maase, *BRAVO Amerika: Erkundungen zur Jugendkultur der Bundesrepublik in den fünziger Jahren* (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1992), 14.

sales figures, even when available, do not usefully reflect gendered patterns of reception. And though the culture of consumerism has been studied in terms of the effect on women in the household, this has been done largely from an economic or social perspective, without considering what women themselves expressed about their role in West Germany's famous postwar *Wirtschaftswunder* (Economic Miracle), and about American support and influence.

In order to examine this question and to start searching for sources, one might begin with the observation that Americanization generally occurred in the home, the schools and neighborhood cafés, permeating civic culture from below.[4] Dorothee Wierling has suggested that "thick description" of the details of everyday life may be the best way to recover women's experience in these spheres, since women have been hidden from traditional historiography in the "unexplored tissue of everyday life."[5] However, sources available in the United States are not particularly revealing, and very few first person voices emerge from historical scholarship on this topic. Most postwar autobiographical material by German women focuses, understandably, on the Second World War and its aftermath. Nevertheless, a survey of diverse sources, including girl's diaries, published memoirs, interviews and films do yield some hints of women's perspectives. Despite occasional anxieties about the loss of cultural identity, first person sources substantiate the impression that American culture permeated women's lives in postwar West Germany in ways that were generally perceived as useful, pleasurable and liberating.

Recent scholarship has viewed Americanization less as an "impact" than a process or set of transactions, with many layers of reception and meaning, beginning in the 1920s with industrial innovation and the modern "girl."[6] Scholars Uta Poiger, Heide Fehrenbach, and Mary Nolan have contributed key studies to the social and cultural changes of the 1950s and broader issues of America as myth, though they rarely draw on first person accounts. Nolan writes that Americanization did not transform Germany into a mini-America; while it became distinctly modern, German society

[4] Ibid.

[5] Dorothee Wierling, "The History of Everyday Life and Gender Relations: On Historical and Historiographical Relationships" in Alf Lüdtke, ed. *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 149-169.

[6] Uta Poiger and Heide Fehrenbach, eds., *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan* (New York: Berghahn Book, 2000), 3-26.

differs from America in key areas such religion, social policy, peace and ecology, and memories of the war.[7] Poiger has written about German girls going crazy for Elvis, but nobody else has traced similar women's responses to culture beyond the late 1950s.[8] Coca Cola, Elvis and American Forces Network radio clearly became part of the postwar landscape, and appeared to provide some diversion from larger issues of traumatic memory and cultural reconstruction in the grand sweep of the Economic Miracle of the late 1950s. Hannah Schissler has chronicled these "miracle years," dwelling on the complexity of choice and "normalcy" for housewives of the 1950s.[9] On the other hand, Erica Carter and Sarah Lennox have written that modern German housewives were instrumental to Germany's economic recovery, exercising agency by actively participating in larger postwar trends of modern domesticity.[10] Agnes Mueller has examined more recent trends of cultural adaptation and has found a model of "creolization" more apt to theorize Germany's use of American culture than the older notion of cultural imperialism.[11]

It is ironic that women's voices are so underrepresented in the record on Germany's cultural exchange with America, since German women led the way in accepting American influences after 1945, starting with personal relationships with GI's. Though generally frowned upon by surrounding communities, social contact between German working class women and U.S. occupation soldiers helped soften Germany's image in American eyes, as both Maria Höhn[12] and Petra Goedde[13] have argued. Even though Germans were generally xenophobic throughout the 1950s, acceptance of American influence and culture increased gradually.[14]

[7] Mary Nolan, "America in the German Imagination" in Poiger and Fehrenbach, 6.
[8] Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 168.
[9] Hannah Schissler, *The Miracle Years, a Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 3-21.
[10] Erica Carter, *How German is She*? *Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 41.
[11] Agnes Müller, *German Pop Culture: How "American" is it?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 1-19.
[12] Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 3-17.
[13] Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender and Foreign relations, 1945-1949 (*New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 199-211.
[14] Elisabeth Noelle, *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947-1966* (Allensbach and Bonn: Verlag for Demoskopie, 1967), 541-543

German feminists gratefully acknowledged the support they received from American military wives in organizing local activist committees starting in the early 1950s.[15] In many cities in the American zone, U.S.-sponsored committees actively taught women how to become involved in local politics.[16] Germany's place on the front line of the Cold War necessitated a special relationship with the United States, and along with food and economic aid, American officials brought liberal-democratic and consumer-oriented messages to the German people, with Voice of America and American Forces Network (AFN) radio, and United States Information Agency (USIA) film programs touring Germany and Austria. Hollywood received favorable distribution deals and dominated movie screens. Such American official efforts on the ground prepared the way for a proliferation of mass-produced U.S. imports. The scope of Germany's Americanization is still being debated, but there is general agreement that by the 1970s, American goods and cultural products were widespread and generally accepted and/or appropriated by West Germans.

POSTWAR CONTEXT: TRAUMA, CULTURE AND WOMEN'S WRITINGS

Cultural developments in West Germany cannot be considered without taking into account the effect of psychological trauma on civilians who experienced unprecedented aerial bombardment, displacement and food shortages during and after the Second World War. Cultural studies scholars of postwar Europe have recently addressed the role of trauma in the remarkable "return to normalcy" experienced throughout the Cold War era.[17] German women who experienced bombing and firestorms continued to suffer nightmares and slept poorly well into the early 1960s.[18] Writer Irmgard Keun noted in 1946 that she was overcome by great dread and was often

[15] Edeltraud Rattenhuber, "Die Amerikaner waren unser Rettungsanker; Eine Diskussion über die schwierige Rolle der Frauen in der Nachkriegszeit und den langen Kampf um die Gleichberechtigung," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 20, 2006.

[16] Barbara Guttmann, ed. *Den weiblichen Einfluss geltend machen: Karlsruher Frauen in der Nachkriegszeit* (Karlsruhe: Badenia, 2000), 194.

[17] Alice Förster and Birgit Beck, "Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: Can a Psychiatric Concept help us understand Postwar Society?" in Bessel and Schumann, *Life after Death: Approaches to Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 15-37.

[18] Carl W. Kaiser, email message to author, November 1, 2007.

afraid to remember.[19] Karen Finell, also a child during the war, went back to her Berlin neighborhood over fifty years later to ask residents what they remembered and found that not a single woman wanted to speak about the war.[20] According to Jörg Friedrich, "Civilians withstood a mental trauma considered impossible. It does not seem like the numbness later gave way."[21] Despite the widespread taboo on discussing the war, Hitler, and the Holocaust, women who had suffered trauma recorded some of their experiences in diaries and letters, or later, worked through their memories in retrospect. Since German reunification, the war generation has been called upon to remember their experiences. (Most of these sources are not yet readily available in the United States.)

Memoirs in print in English, however, can function for scholars not only as a public history record on questions of Nazi guilt, complicity and the war; they can also be read as source material for the study of women's subjectivity and identity with regard to cultural questions.

The undercurrent of trauma began to surface in the late 1960s as the generation of the so-called '68ers began to attack their parents' silences about the war, and to question the assumptions of West Germany's materialist society in memoirs such as Sabine Reichel's *What did you do in the War, Daddy?* written in the United States in 1975.[22] In addressing themselves to their mothers and fathers, the '68ers highlighted issues of repression and the escape into materialism. Numerous memoirs confirm the silence, at least in the private sphere, on any questions relating to the war.[23] Yet only one memoir, published in 1981, made the link between traumatic memory and soothing prosperity explicit, suggesting that Germans preferred not to make this connection conscious even after their prosperity had been secure for several decades. [24] To many German men and women, the Economic Miracle, with its proliferation of appliances, new cars, and imported fashions and music covered over

[19] Irmgard Keun, *Wenn wir alle gut wären* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1983), 170.

[20] Karen Finell, *Good-bye to the Mermaids: A Childhood Lost in Hitler's Berlin* (University of Missouri Press, 2006), 1-7.

[21] Jörg Friedrich, *The Fire: The bombing of Germany, 1940-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 448.

[22] Sabine Reichel, *What did you do in the War, Daddy?* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989).

[23] Ursula Hegi, *Tearing the Silence: Being German in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 13-44.

[24] Wedeltraut Von Staden, *Darkness over the Valley* (New Haven and New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1981), x.

the psychic wounds of guilt and defeat with a prosperous modern lifestyle whose shiny surfaces deflected and silenced traumatic memories. In thinking about how women regarded the changes in their culture under U.S. influence, it is useful to remember that millions of German women, who survived the war in greater numbers than men, experienced some post-traumatic effects and demonstrably wished to bury their pain.

REBUILDING FAMILY AND HOME

The U.S., in its efforts to stabilize vanquished totalitarian societies, promoted an American way of life based on conservative gender roles and personal consumption related to home and family. The new "normalcy" took shape within numerous western societies as they adopted a modern way of life, which the U.S. promoted throughout the western world.[25] Surveys of post-war West German women's magazines confirm the emphasis on consumerism and traditional homemaking, providing prescriptive discourses for stability and progress by adopting American-style, upwardly mobile consumer lifestyles.[26] Millions of German women who had born the brunt of civilian suffering returned to the private sphere to participate in this project of personal rebuilding and normalization. Married women struggled to put marriages back together with returning POW's and (re)form family life according to the official models promoted by the culturally conservative ruling party (CDU), while single women struggled with a lack of good career choices and social stigma.[27] Robert Moeller suggests that women were relieved to return to more traditional roles after having to function as heads of families for so long and doing hard physical labor to reconstruct cities and stand in line for rations.[28]

Women followed official and commercial imperatives to become thrifty, skilled housewives, boosting the economy by saving up to purchase major household appliances and other consumer goods, thus playing a central role in driving economic growth. [29]

[25] Lennox, Sara, "How American is She?" in Agnes Müller, 150.
[26] Christiane Schmerl, *Das Frauen-und Mädchenbild in den Medien* (Leske Verlag and Budrich, 1984).
[27] Elizabeth Heineman, *What Difference Does Husband Make*? (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 1-17.
[28] Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in Politics of Postwar West Germany* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 33.
[29] Carter, 41.

They also continued to build cinema and music concerts into their leisure budget. Sources indicate that war weary women craved culture (*Kulturhunger*) right after the war, especially music. In Mainz, which sustained heavy bombing, residents began attending concerts in a temporary theater by the end of 1945.[30] Though few women's memoirs discuss housework, author Luise Rinser recalls hanging laundry on the roof of a modern, new apartment building in 1948, then having to iron her conductor husband's tuxedo shirts because none of the laundries would accept them.[31] Her recollection of this weekly drudgery stands out as an exception. Most histories agree that housewives actively embraced their role in building the social market economy, which followed an American global model of modernization and rationalization of household consumption.[32] Thus women played a crucial role in shaping West German culture in the 1950s and '60s by consuming American-style products (especially household appliances) and keeping a technologically modern, efficient household, thus adopting a lifestyle radically different from the traumatic crisis years of 1942-1948.

ELITE SOURCES

Most women whose memoirs gained publishers' attention were members of the educated and upper classes. First person writings under consideration here come from literary authors, entertainers, and daughters of the middle class who had access to higher education. In the literary scene of postwar Germany, female authors had failed to gain much prominence, and those who did publish memoirs rarely commented directly on culture in terms of trauma or Americanization. Controversial young author Gisela Elsner satirized the gluttonous excess of the Economic Miracle in the 1964 novel *Die Riesenzwerge (The Giant Dwarves)*.[33] The prolific novelist Luise Rinser published several memoirs, as did Elisabeth Plessen and Angela Mechtel. Of these, only Mechtel commented on the United States directly, and negatively. Her novel *Die Liedermachererin (The Songmaker)* criticizes the soullessness of New York City slums and urban canyons; in an interview she noted that American men were frighteningly naïve, especially given their

[30] Birgit Sachs, *Mainzer Erinnerungen: Frauen und Kinder in der Nachkriegszeit* (Mainz: Gesellschaft für Volkskunde in Rheinland-Pfalz, 1994), 79.
[31] Luise Rinser, *Den Wolf Unarmen* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1984), 7.
[32] Carter, 24.
[33] Chris Weedon, ed. *Post-War Women's Writing in German: Feminist Critical Approaches* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1997), 1-24.

international power.[34] Feminism produced a body of women's literature or *Frauenliteratur* in the 1970s, focusing primarily on struggles with identity and victimization.[35] Overall, literature by West Germany's women writers was rather uninterested in the topic of Americanization, and any treatment of collective trauma remained oblique.

Another elite perspective is found in the memoirs of West German glamour queens in fashion and entertainment.[36] The *Burda* magazine empire testified to 1950s American-style opulence with the rich palette and architecturally streamlined modernity of featured designs.[37] *Burda* photo spreads and dress patterns revealed the same French elegance (especially Dior's "New Look") which dominated American silhouettes of the decade. Publisher Aenne Burda recalled the Economic Miracle as a wonderful time. Her drive, she stated, came from "*die Freude zu schaffen,"* translated variously as the joy in creating, achieving or managing, and she noted that young people felt equal and upwardly mobile.[38] German women also eagerly participated in the decade's cult of the "new woman," touted by diet and fashion experts.[39] Miss Germany of 1949 praised American girls' superior, slim figures.[40] Girls' diaries from the 1950s mention concerns with weight control, and anxiety about the use of make-up and nail polish.[41] Actress Christine Kaufmann noted that American women had a better sense of their own beauty as a commodity compared to German women.[42] Other German actresses such as Hildegard Knef, and UFA star Ilse Werner gave some account of their time in America, yet failed to

[34] Angela Mechtel interview in *Bilder von America: Gespräche mit deutschen Schriftstellern*, Heinz D. Osterle, ed. (Münster: Englisch Amerikanische Studien, 1987), 157.

[35] Irmgard Wagner, "Six Theses on Contemporary German Literature" *German Studies Review*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (October 1987): 503-526.

[36] Judith Betzler, ed. *Aenne Burda: die Macht des Schönen* (München: Verlagshaus Goethestrasse, 1999), 65.

[37] Christina Kaufmann, *Christine Kaufmann und ich: mein Doppelleben* (Bergisch Gladbach: Gustav Lübbe Verlag, 2005), 235.

[38] Betzler, 66.

[39] Kerstin von Freytag-Löringhoff, "Die Jahre der Anmut" in Doris Foitzik, *Vom Trümmerkind zum Teenager: Kindheit und Jugend in der Nachkriegszeit* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1992), 149.

[40] *Los Angeles Times*, September 1949-October 1956.

[41] Waltraut Küppers, *Mädchentagebucher der Nachkriegszeit: ein kritischer Beitrag zum sogenannten Wandel der Jugend* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1964), 16-192.

[42] Christine Kaufmann, *Christine Kaufmann und ich: mein Doppelleben* (Bergisch Gladbach: Gustav Lübbe Verlag, 2005).

comment on America's impact in their own country.[43] For the female founders of West German society, fashion, art, furnishings, appliances, magazines, i.e. any designed accoutrement for living, spoke to their perception of themselves as members of a society in progress—proof of West Germany's self-made success. The memoirs show that elite women who found success in literary and media circles were not explicitly concerned with Americanization as a major theme in the 1950s, let alone as a threat.

YOUTH AND POP CULTURE

As postwar prosperity became more widespread in the late 1950s, a fresh, youthful optimism began to supplant the darkness of the crisis years. German boys imitated American rock 'n' roll fashions and made themselves into public nuisances (known as the "*Halbstarke*.")[44] However, according to estimates, only about one to two percent of the population of young girls aged fifteen to nineteen participated in this culture.[45] Elvis won over the hearts of German girls (and the tolerance of their parents). Then, a German Elvis substitute, Peter Kraus, and his sidekick Connie Froboess, dominated a new 1960s youth pop culture tied in with radio, jukeboxes, and more casual dances alongside the continuing rite of passage of the ballroom dance class. Photos of the era show German girls mixing American-style tight pants or poodle skirts and ballet slippers with pigtails and homemade woolen sweaters.[46] American rock 'n' roll had been tamed and mainstreamed in West Germany, as Uta Poiger has described in detail. Connie Froboess gushed that the Americans "…seemed to us not only like our liberators, but also as liberators of the heart, the soul…. We thought we could do marvelous things without even knowing to what the goal was."[47] Though some German commentators railed against their "Coca-Colonization" by America, a cultural pattern was set by which young women could join in the American-style youth spirit through consumption of music, dancing, and fashion trends.[48]

[43] Ilse Werner, *So wird's nie wieder sein—: ein Leben mit Pfiff* (Bayreuth: Hestia, 1982).
[44] Poiger, 71-106.
[45] Foitzik, 114.
[46] Maase, 210.
[47] Peter Wagner, *50 Jahre Popmusik und Jugendkultur in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Ideal, 1999), 20.
[48] Rolf Winter, *Little America: Die Amerikanisierung der Deutschen Republic* (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhring, 1995).

THE BOURGEOISIE: YOUNG GIRLS' DIARIES, 1945-1961

A collection of sixteen teenage girls' diaries, presented in a sociological study titled *Mädchentagebücher der Nachkriegszeit* reflected concerns consistent with the psychological upheavals discussed earlier.[49] Drawn mainly from the southwestern region of Germany (though several girls were refugees from the East), these ordinary, middle class teenagers wrote about family conflict, God and religion, painful memories of bombing, and a yearning for friendship and romance. In the 1950s, West German girls still shared their parents' taste in popular and classical music,[50] were forbidden to wear pants at school,[51] and put most of their energies into preparing for further study or finding jobs. Reputation, a continuing, traditional concern, was mentioned less often in the later entries (one mother reminded her daughter that a girl's good reputation "hangs from a silk thread.")[52] The majority of teenage girls wrote in their diaries that they enjoyed movies, music, school outings, and youth groups. They also wrote about attraction to boys and struggled with normal adolescent feelings, including earnest spiritual reflection about the role God in their lives and in history.[53] One constant theme was young women's love of music. One girl wrote in her diary of a Gieseking piano concert with the enthusiasm one might expect from a rock fan. Another wrote that Bach was her favorite composer. At least one girl played several instruments and loved performing in local ensembles. Despite the stresses of displacement and scarcity of goods right after the war, it seems that young women quickly adjusted to these new realities and looked to familiar forms of culture for distraction and comfort.

As time went on and displaced families settled into new communities, poetry, and career choice become more prevalent themes in girls' diaries. Of the girls whose diaries were collected in this volume, a few mention American movies, and none refers to American pop music, perhaps because the diaries mainly cover the period before Rock and Pop really exploded in mass culture. The diaries testify that travel provided relief and excitement from the

[49] Küppers, 16-192.
[50] Ute, Frevert, *Women in German History from bourgeois emancipation to sexual liberation* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1989).
[51] Arnold Sywottek, "The Americanization of Everyday Life? Early Trends in Consumer and Leisure-Time Behavoir" in Michael Ermarth, ed. *America and the Shaping of German Society, 1945*-1955 (Providence and Oxford: Berg, 1993), 149.
[52] Küppers, 43.
[53] Küppers, 16-192.

pressures of school and family for girls in the 1950s. Beate Busch had seen American films such as *The Forbidden Planet* (1956), although she was not enamored with science fiction monsters.

German impressions of the U.S. were strongly shaped by movies and movie publicity, though German films remained more popular at the box office throughout the 1950s.[54] Female German guests to the U.S. were quoted as praising the superior entertainment value of American films.[55] A girl in Hessen, Gertraud Otto, mentions going to see *An American in Paris* (1953) three times. She also visited the Amerika Haus (USIA-sponsored library) in her city and enjoyed jazz evenings, including a performance by Louis Armstrong. This girl, who went on to become a teacher in her city's American school, also liked cowboy styles and whistled pop tunes, which, along with the other American attractions, seem to have seduced her away from her first career choice working in an office.[56] Gertraud Otto may have been the exception, and not all girls mentioned American films or products, but they came up often enough to suggest that such cultural products were both readily available and represented a matter of taste and emphasis for girls rather than something that required conscious acceptance or rejection. Alongside the usual worries of adolescent adjustment, the majority of middle class girls cared about education, literature, and classical music, as a way to inquire into their own cultural identity.

One question that arises in using diaries as source material for historical interpretation is whether they can give an accurate perspective on the inner life of this generation of women. They clearly have some value for helping to understand everyday life, and when used in context with statistics, social and cultural history, they help provide a fuller picture of the middle class, which was such a dominant force in West German culture. Fewer sources are available for studying working class girls and women

BEYOND THE POSTWAR ERA

As these women grew up and experienced the cultural upheavals of the 1960s, the German Feminist movement, which grew out of the 1968 student protests, opened up new means of

[54] Thomas Koebner, "Hollywood in Germany" in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1968-1990, Vol. 2* (Washington, D.C. and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 350.
[55] *Los Angeles Times*, September 1949-October 1956.
[56] Küppers, 139-150.

expression for women. Early feminist journals featured American articles in translation, and German feminist filmmakers connected with American feminist theorists at festivals and conferences.[57] However, on the larger political stage, some female intellectuals and activists in Germany took a dim view of America as the Reagan era brought efforts to place nuclear warheads on German soil.

While the influence of American culture continues to be debated in an age of U.S. global cultural dominance, American films, books and music regularly appear on German bestseller lists, and American television programs, dubbed into German, are a staple. Focusing on women can help scholars understand how less powerful segments in society appropriate such cultural products for their own uses, and how women's choices shape a country's civic culture and private sphere. At least one historian finds that Americanization was, largely, an unconscious process.[58] Given the prevalence of post-traumatic numbing, it would not be surprising if cultural developments remained unarticulated, given the pattern of repression confirmed in written memoirs. The sources surveyed here are not numerous enough to permit firm conclusions, but they suggest that there was an element of choice and liberation in the way women of West Germany's founding era approached American cultural products and ideas and incorporated them into their lives. The response to Americanization by women sampled here appears to have been more positive than negative. Their continuing focus on traditional concerns confirms Nolan's view of unique aspects of German culture, which remained largely unaltered by American influences, despite the occasional complaint that "Germany has lost its soul."[59] Further study of women's writings such as these will help elucidate how culture influenced their sense of self, their consumption of goods and media, in short, how their participation in culture shaped their identities and the societies in which they lived.

[57] Helen Fehervary; Claudia Lenssen; Judith Mayne, "From Hitler to Hepburn: A Discussion of Women's Film Production and Reception, *New German Critique* 24/25 (1981-1982) 172-185.

[58] Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 26-28.

[59] Eric T. Hansen, "Typisch deutsch; Die gefühlte Amerikanisierung," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 13, 2004.