

## **From the Fear of Conception to the Management of Sex: Birth Control in West German Sex Education Material, c. 1945-1980<sup>1</sup>**

Lutz D.H. Sauerteig, Durham University

### **Introduction**

Reproduction featured as one of the central topics in sex education material for the young. But it turned out to be a tricky one. Sex educators had to negotiate a thin line between mediating sexual knowledge and the concern that such knowledge would incite premature sexual behaviour in the young. Hence, narratives about reproduction are important for not only what they say but also for what they are silent about, what authors thought unimportant or inappropriate to convey to the young. For the first half of the twentieth century up to the 1960s, narratives about reproduction had two main functions. First, they explained the reproductive body, not only to impart biological knowledge, but also to instil a feeling of awe towards nature and God's creation and to the mother's sacrifices. Secondly, by portraying pregnancy and childbirth as dangerous and very painful experiences, these narratives were at the same time intended as stark warnings for the young, particularly girls, not to engage in what was seen as premature and immoral sexual activities before marriage.<sup>2</sup> Although the young had to know about sex and reproduction, this knowledge had to be put aside immediately until it was time to be recovered when they had matured enough to enter married life and to exercise this knowledge appropriately for the purpose of procreation.

Unsurprisingly birth control had hardly any place in these narratives, despite the sex reform movement of the Weimar Republic propagating birth control and campaigning for easier access to condoms and diaphragms.<sup>3</sup> Though Pope Pius XI accepted in

---

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the Wellcome Trust, London, for having funded my research on the history of sex education. My thanks go to Simon Forrest (Durham), Hans-Georg Hofer (Münster) and Sarah Toulalan (Exeter) for their comments and suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> Lutz Sauerteig: Representations of pregnancy and childbirth in (West) German sex education books, 1900s-1970s, in: Lutz Sauerteig, Roger Davidson (eds): *Shaping Sexual Knowledge. A Cultural History of Sex Education in Twentieth Century Europe*, London, New York 2009, pp. 120-160.

<sup>3</sup> Atina Grossmann: *Reforming Sex. The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform 1920-1950*, New York, Oxford 1995; Cornelia Osborne: *The New Woman and generation conflict: perceptions of young women's sexual mores in the Weimar Republic*, in: Mark Roseman (ed.): *Generations in Conflict*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 137-163; Kristine von Soden: *Die*

his encyclical *Casti connubii* from 1930 that intercourse had a purpose in marriage beyond procreation, he banned all contraceptives for Catholics but the 'natural' rhythm method. With very few exceptions, none of the popular sex educators at the time explained contraception to young people as an option, and, if mentioned, birth control was described as on a par with abortion and therefore morally repugnant. Such views persisted in sex education publications throughout the Third Reich and well into the 1950s. In 1933, the Nazi government in line with its pro-natalist ideology had imposed restrictions and, in 1941, by order of Heinrich Himmler, a complete ban on advertising and sale of contraceptives such that they were removed from public view. Only condoms as prophylactics against venereal diseases were exempted and continued to be available throughout the NS period.<sup>4</sup>

During the post-war years, many politicians, physicians, judges, members of the Churches as well as Christian activists strongly opposed making contraceptives more accessible. One reason was a general concern about a declining birth rate. More pertinent, though, were moral considerations. It remained illegal to publicly promote or make available contraceptives and preventatives against venereal diseases in an indecent manner (section 184 of the German Penal Code which dates back to the Penal Code of Imperial Germany). This precluded, for instance, selling condoms through outside vending machines in public spaces and restricted them to those less publicly accessible such as barbershops and men's toilets in bars or railway stations. Here, though, vending machines were fairly widespread but inaccessible to women. Furthermore, Himmler's 1941 banning order continued to be enforced in several German states, including Baden, Bavaria and the Rhineland-Palatinate, but it was revoked in a few others such as Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Bremen. In 1953, a revised version of the 1927 Law for Combatting Venereal Diseases legalised the promotion and display of officially approved prophylactics against sexually transmitted diseases, including condoms. But, it remained illegal to promote and advertise contraceptives. Nevertheless, by the late 1950s a significant

---

Sexualberatungsstellen der Weimarer Republik 1919-1933, Berlin 1988; Maria Mesner: Geburten/Kontrolle. Reproduktionspolitik im 20. Jahrhundert, Vienna 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Sybille Steinbacher: *Wie der Sex nach Deutschland kam. Der Kampf um Sittlichkeit und Anstand in der frühen Bundesrepublik*, Munich 2011, p. 240; Annette Timm: *The Politics of Fertility in Twentieth-Century Berlin*, Cambridge et al. 2010, chapters 3 and 4; Dagmar Herzog: *Sex after Fascism. Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany*, Princeton, Oxford 2005, p. 24; Rainer Mackensen (ed.): *Bevölkerungslehre und Bevölkerungspolitik im 'Dritten Reich'*, Opladen 2004; Paul Weindling: *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945*, Cambridge et al. 1989.

proportion of condoms, between 30 to 50 percent, were sold through vending machines which, despite legal restrictions and continued public concern, were now also installed outside some pharmacies and barbershops. As long as only the brand name was given and the word condom avoided, and the vending machine placed in a back alley and not along a busy road, this seemed to have been acceptable. However, the legal position was unclear and court rulings varied significantly between different court levels and between federal states. This resulted in condom vending machines being more common in one part of the country than in others. Eventually, in spring 1970, the Federal Court of Justice legalised the sale of condoms through outside vending machines in public spaces if it was done discreetly. Yet, the association of condoms with venereal diseases and the places they were for sale made buying condoms rather unattractive and difficult for adolescents.<sup>5</sup>

My chapter contrasts this silence and the depiction of contraceptives as damaging body and mind with a new approach that emerged in the late 1960s. Whereas conservative Christian politicians and the Churches tried their best to restore and preserve traditional sexual moral views and family values during the decades following the end of the war, attitudes towards sexual morality in the younger generations changed fundamentally within a secularising West-German society. The introduction of penicillin to treat syphilis and gonorrhoea effectively after the Second World War and the contraceptive pill ('anti-baby-pill'), which became available in West Germany in 1961, had removed much of the fear that non-marital sex had posed for centuries. Hence, the traditional morality that sex educators and other moral authorities had continued to preach since the 1950s appeared increasingly obsolete.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Section 20, subsection 1, Gesetz zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten, 23 Jul. 1953, in: Bundesgesetzblatt 1953, part I, pp. 700-706; Gerhard Potrykus: Zur Frage des Feilbietens von Präservativen in Warenautomaten, in: *Concepte* 6, 1970, No 8/9, pp. 45-47. Cf. Steinbacher (note 4), pp. 44-45, 241-242; Elizabeth Heineman: Before Porn was Legal. The Erotica Empire of Beate Uhse, Chicago 2011, chapter 2, pp. 106-107, 110-111; Timm (note 4), pp. 243-244; Herzog (note 4), pp. 122-126; Lutz Sauerteig: Krankheit, Sexualität, Gesellschaft: Geschlechtskrankheiten und Gesundheitspolitik in Deutschland im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert, Stuttgart 1999, pp. 290-318.

<sup>6</sup> Steinbacher (note 4), chapter 3; Heineman (note 5), chapters 3 & 5; Timm (note 4), pp. 222-226, 297, 299; Eva-Maria Silies: Liebe, Lust und Last. Die Pille als weibliche Generationserfahrung in der Bundesrepublik 1960-1980, Göttingen 2010, pp. 328-335; Lutz Sauerteig: Die Herstellung des sexuellen und erotischen Körpers in der westdeutschen Jugendzeitschrift BRAVO in den 1960er und 1970er Jahren, in: *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 42, 2007, pp. 142-179, here pp. 156-162; Herzog (note 4), chapters 2-3; Franz X. Eder: Die 'Sexuelle Revolution' - Befreiung und/oder Repression?, in:

This newly experienced freedom from the fears of infection and unplanned pregnancies allowed the younger generations of the 1960s a more casual approach to sex than in previous decades. However, there is no indication that teenagers generally pursued a promiscuous sex life. Sixty-eight year Ulrike Heider (\*1947), although admittedly impressed by the 'free sex life' of her fellow students, remembered that 'promiscuity was not seen as a long-term solution' and was far less often practiced than generally imagined. As the first representative survey of teenage sexuality by Volkmar Sigusch and Gunter Schmidt from 1970 indicated, the values of love and fidelity in a relationship still ranked very high amongst the teenager generation of the 1960s. However, teenagers appeared to have had their first sexual experiences, including sexual intercourse, at a significantly younger age than those of the previous decade. One third of 16- to 17-year-old schoolchildren in West German cities claimed to have had sex during the previous twelve months, another third asserted they had practiced petting, and the remaining third professed to only have masturbated or to have been sexually abstinent. In general, teenagers of the 1960s aged 16 to 17 would show similar patterns of sexual behaviour as the 19- to 20-year-olds of the 1950s.<sup>7</sup>

How easy was it for these teenagers to access contraceptives? Whereas adults could obtain contraceptives, through a flourishing mail-order market and other outlets, and many married couples practiced the rhythm method, young people were either ignorant of contraceptives or found it impossible or too embarrassing to get hold of them. Consequently they often put their faith in the male partner 'being careful' and practicing coitus interruptus.<sup>8</sup> The 1970 survey of the sexual behaviour of 16- and 17-year-old schoolchildren indicated that 31 percent of boys and 26 percent of girls did not use any contraceptives, and 7 and 27 percent respectively

---

Ingrid Bauer, Christa Hämmerle, Gabriella Hauch (eds): *Liebe und Widerstand*, Vienna et al. 2005, pp. 397-414; Gunter Schmidt: *Zur Sozialgeschichte jugendlichen Sexualverhaltens in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, in: Claudia Bruns, Tilmann Walter (eds): *Von Lust und Schmerz*, Cologne et al. 2004, pp. 312-325; Gunter Schmidt (ed.): *Kinder der sexuellen Revolution. Kontinuität und Wandel studentischer Sexualität 1966-1996*, Gießen 2000; Klaus Theweleit: *What did we do to our song, girl ... (boy) ... Zu Pillen, zur Pille und zu einigen Schicksalen des Sexuellen in Deutschland von 1960 bis heute*, in: Gisela Staupe, Lisa Vieth (eds): *Die Pille*, Berlin 1996, pp. 21-53, here pp. 33-34.

<sup>7</sup> Ulrike Heider: *Vögeln ist schön. Die Sexrevolte von 1968 und was von ihr bleibt*, Berlin 2014, pp. 62, 65; Volkmar Sigusch, Gunter Schmidt: *Jugendsexualität. Dokumentation einer Untersuchung*, Stuttgart 1973, pp. 11-16, 71-76, 153, 185. If not indicated otherwise, all translations are by the author.

<sup>8</sup> Heineman (note 5), chapters 3 & 5; Herzog (note 4), pp. 125-126.

had trusted to the withdrawal method during their first intercourse. Only 25 percent of boys and 16 percent of girls had relied on the contraceptive pill, and 26 and 23 percent respectively on condoms. During subsequent intercourse, 15 percent of the teenagers still did not use any contraceptives, or used them only rarely, whereas over 80 percent of the boys and 76 percent of the girls used them very often or always. Sigusch and Schmidt concluded that contraception was 'one of the most crucial problems of contemporary adolescent sexuality'.<sup>9</sup> By the end of the 1960s, as part of the New Left movement for reforming West-German society, schoolchildren and university students not only called for the introduction of sex education at schools and demanded free access to contraceptives, including the pill, but also took matters into their own hands. Schoolchildren, mostly at secondary schools (*Gymnasien*), provided fellow pupils with information on sex and contraception in seminars, teach-ins and articles that they published in their school magazines. These often caused public outrage, resulted in disciplinary actions from the school, and, in some cases, even criminal prosecution.<sup>10</sup>

The sexual reforms introduced since the late 1960s were attempts by West German governments to catch up with these changing sexual moral norms and practices. In 1968, ministers for culture and education of the federal states agreed to make sex education in schools mandatory.<sup>11</sup> Simultaneously, and partly linked to this decision,

<sup>9</sup> Sigusch, Schmidt (note 7), pp. 33, 170-171.

<sup>10</sup> Polit-Gruppen. Herr heizt, in: *Der Spiegel* 1967, No 18, pp. 65-66; Michael Luft [i.e. Klaus Rainer Röhl]: Die Pille unter der Schulbank. Liebe und Sex auf deutschen Oberschulen, in: *Konkret* 1967, No 4, pp. 20-4; Sex mit 17. Schülerinnen proben den Aufstand, in: *Konkret* 1967, No 5, pp. 8-12; Peter Brügge [i.e. Ernst Hess]: 'Ihr könntet uns Liebe erlauben', in: *Der Spiegel* 1968, No 15, pp. 89-94; Stefan Aust: Sex & Politik. Die Revolution der Schüler, in: *Konkret* 1968, No 2, pp. 8-14; Bundesarchiv (BArch) B304/3151: W. Seiring: Thema des Tages: Wie sag ich's meinen Schülern? Sexualerziehung in der Bundesrepublik, in: *Süddeutsche Schulzeitung* 1969, pp. 259-261, here p. 260; Günter Amendt: *Sexfront*, Frankfurt/M. 1970, pp. 64-65. Cf. Timothy S. Brown: *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962-1978*, Cambridge, New York 2013, pp. 244-252; Detlef Siegfried: *Time is on my side. Konsum und Politik in der westdeutschen Jugendkultur der 60er Jahre*, Göttingen 2006, pp. 498-506; Torsten Gass-Bolm: *Revolution im Klassenzimmer? Die Schülerbewegung 1967-1970 und der Wandel der deutschen Schule*, in: Christina von Hodenberg, Detlef Siegfried (eds): *Wo '1968' liegt*, Göttingen 2006, pp. 113-139, here pp. 119-124; Günter Amendt: 'Sexfront'. Revisited, in: *Zeitschrift für Sexualforschung* 19, 2006, pp. 159-172, here pp. 162-163; Herzog (note 4), chapter 4, esp. pp. 147-148; Torsten Gass-Bolm: *Das Gymnasium 1945-1980. Bildungsreform und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Westdeutschland*, Göttingen 2005, pp. 268, 275-276; Axel Schildt: *Nachwuchs für die Rebellion – die Schülerbewegung der späten 60er Jahre*, in: Jürgen Reulecke (ed.): *Generationalität und Lebensgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert*, Munich 2003, pp. 229-251; Ulrike Heider: *Schülerprotest in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Frankfurt/M. 1984, pp. 88-128, 169.

<sup>11</sup> Empfehlung zur Sexualerziehung in den Schulen, in: *Sammlung der Beschlüsse der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Neuwied 1969, No. 659, 3 Oct. 1968.

there was an explosion of new well illustrated sex education material for the young which included, for instance, detailed photographs of naked bodies. This 'pictorial turn' was influenced by the so-called 'sex wave' which had brought erotic novels to book shelves and images of naked women on magazine covers, showed nudity in films and adverts, and introduced sex shops to towns and cities.<sup>12</sup> The new sex education material introduced different sexual behaviour 'scripts' that resonated more with young people's sexual experiences. Rather than focussing on decency and morality, these new sexual scripts provided young people with biological and erotic knowledge about their bodies and suggested an ethics that was based on consent between equal partners in a sexual encounter. This 'consensus' or 'negotiation ethics' (*Verhandlungsmoral*) became the parameter for the new sexual scripts which required couples to talk and agree about sex but removed any normative moral judgements.<sup>13</sup>

Importantly, with easier access to sexual knowledge and greater acceptance of young people's sexual practices came the requirement to learn about sex and to know about reproduction. Those who did not understand the facts of sex, who were not aware of what was expected from them, and what they had to do in a sexual encounter now only had themselves to blame when things went wrong, when they were rejected by their partner, or when an unplanned pregnancy occurred. Young people had to learn the skills to master their sex lives. To achieve a fulfilling and happy sex life, they had to incorporate specific sexual knowledge and manage certain techniques, including those necessary for prevention of an unwanted pregnancy. Michel Foucault introduced the notion of 'technologies of the self' to analyse such techniques, which he defined as 'permit[ting] individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Martin Morlock [i.e. Günther Goercke]: 'Was gibt's neues, Pussy?', in: *Der Spiegel* 1965, No 51, pp. 133-138; Sex: Was für Zeiten, in: *Der Spiegel* 1968, No 47, pp. 46-67; Sex-Welle: Thema eins, in: *Der Spiegel*, 1970, No 32, pp. 32-46. Cf. Sauerteig (note 2), pp. 141-55; Lutz Sauerteig: 'Wie soll ich es nur anstellen, ohne etwas falsch zu machen?' *Der Rat der 'Bravo'* in Sachen Sex in den sechziger und siebziger Jahren, in: Peter-Paul Bänzinger et al. (eds): *Fragen Sie Dr. Sex!*, Berlin 2010, pp. 123-158, here pp. 136-137; Steinbacher (note 4), chapter 3; Heineman (note 5), pp. 105-107; Herzog (note 4), chapters 3 & 4; Eder (note 6).

<sup>13</sup> Sauerteig (note 12); Gunter Schmidt: *Spätmoderne Sexualverhältnisse*, in: Christiane Schmerl et al. (eds): *Sexuelle Szenen*, Opladen 2000, pp. 268-280; Gunter Schmidt: *Sexuelle Verhältnisse. Über das Verschwinden der Sexualmoral*, Reinbek 1998, pp. 8-19; William Simon, John H. Gagnon: *Sexual scripts. Permanence and change*, in: *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 15, 1986, pp. 97-120.

themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.’<sup>14</sup>

My chapter investigates the representation of contraceptives in sex education material in light of a concept of governmentality that takes the interaction of technologies of the self and other techniques, such as those of power, into account, mediates different forms of action and practices for conducting individuals and collectives, as well as for transforming the individual her-/himself, and acknowledges the close relationship between knowledge and power.<sup>15</sup> Foucault understands the power of government as ‘a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself’.<sup>16</sup> To catch this equivocal character of power, he suggests the notion of ‘conduct’ because ‘to conduct’ means both to behave ‘within a more or less open field of possibilities’ and to lead others.<sup>17</sup> Hence, when using technologies of the self, individuals are referred to or can actively seek for themselves cultural scripts that have been suggested to, or imposed upon, them – and they can choose to modify, ignore, reject or resist such scripts. The wide range of contemporary sex advice and education literature, therefore, provides historians with excellent sources for an investigation of such cultural scripts for an effective sexual self-management.<sup>18</sup>

To think about contraception in these terms is an attempt to move away from the kind of explicit or implicit value judgements one can find, for instance, in investigations of the cultural and political changes in West Germany during the 1960s and 1970s which are referring to a process of ‘liberalisation’ as an analytical

---

<sup>14</sup> Michel Foucault: Technologies of the self, in: Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, Patrick Hutton (eds): *Technologies of the Self*, Amherst 1988, pp. 16-49, here p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Foucault (note 14). Cf. Thomas Lemke: *Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique*, Boulder & London 2012; Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, Thomas Lemke: *From Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France to studies of governmentality. An introduction*, in: Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, Thomas Lemke (eds): *Governmentality*, New York, London 2011, pp. 1-33; Thomas Lemke: *Gouvernementalität und Biopolitik*, Wiesbaden 2007, pp. 13, 36-45; Stefanie Duttweiler: *Sein Glück machen. Arbeit am Glück als neoliberale Regierungstechnologie*, Konstanz 2007, pp. 27-30; Nikolas Rose: *Powers of Freedom. Reframing Political Thought*, Cambridge 1999, pp. 1-11.

<sup>16</sup> Michel Foucault: *About the beginning of the hermeneutics of the self. Two lectures at Dartmouth*, in: *Political Theory* 21, 1993, pp. 198-227, here p. 204.

<sup>17</sup> Michel Foucault: *The subject and power [1982]*, in: Michel Foucault: *Power*, ed. by James Faubion, London 2000, pp. 326-48, here p. 341.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sabine Maasen: *Sexualberatung auf dem Boulevard. Ein Beitrag zur Genealogie normal/istisch/er Selbstführungskompetenz*, in: Bänzinger et al. (eds) (note 12), pp. 317-345; Duttweiler (note 15).

category.<sup>19</sup> Foucault, too, refers to 'liberalism', however not in terms of a political ideology or economic theory but as a form of government which replaces external by internal regulation and exerts power through indirect interventions. The liberal government 'incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less [...] but it is always a way of acting upon one or more acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action.'<sup>20</sup> My chapter demonstrates such techniques of (neo)liberal government at work committing the young and unmarried to use contraceptives to avoid unplanned pregnancies and, at the same time, experience a happier sex life.

### Warnings Against Contraception, 1950s and Early 1960s

Two of the most popular sex education books of the 1950s and early 1960s, Theodor Bovet's *The Woman-to-Be* and *From Man to Man*, which were both written for adolescents, illustrate this change of significance of contraceptive technology. Both books were first published in Switzerland in 1943 and 1944 respectively and saw 12 reprints in post-war West Germany.<sup>21</sup>

Bovet (1900-1976), a Swiss-born neurologist and Protestant marriage counsellor, described reproduction and bringing up children as the main purposes of marriage. The context in which Bovet discussed contraception was hereditary diseases and serious illness which provided the only legitimate justification for birth control in

---

<sup>19</sup> E.g. Ulrich Herbert: Liberalisierung als Lernprozeß: Die Bundesrepublik in der deutschen Geschichte - eine Skizze, in: Ulrich Herbert (ed.): Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland, Göttingen 2002, pp. 7-49; Schmidt, Sozialgeschichte (note 6), pp. 315, 319; Brown (note 10), chapter 7. Building on Herbert's notion of a process of liberalisation, e.g. Steinbacher (note 4), p. 16; Heineman (note 5), pp. 2-8. For a critique of such narratives of liberalisation and emancipation, cf. Peter-Paul Bänzinger et al.: Sexuelle Revolution? Zur Sexualitätsgeschichte seit den 1960er Jahren im deutschsprachigen Raum, in: Peter-Paul Bänzinger et al. (eds): Sexuelle Revolution?, Bielefeld 2015, pp. 7-23; Franz X. Eder: Die lange Geschichte der 'Sexuellen Revolution' in Westdeutschland (1950er bis 1980er Jahre), in: *ibid.*, pp. 25-59; Benno Gammerl: Frau Muskeltyp, Herr Hexe und Fräulein Butch? Geschlechtlichkeiten und Homosexualitäten in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, in: Julia Paulus, Eva-Maria Silies, Kerstin Wolff (eds): Zeitgeschichte als Geschlechtergeschichte, Frankfurt/M., New York 2012, pp. 225-244, here pp. 243-245; Peter-Paul Bänzinger, Julia Stegmann: Politisierungen und Normalisierung. Sexualitätsgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts im deutschsprachigen Raum, in: H-Soz-u-Kult 5 Nov. 2010 (<http://www.hsozkult.de/literaturereview/id/forschungsberichte-1120>, last accessed 9 Feb. 2015).

<sup>20</sup> Michel Foucault: The subject of power, in: Michel Foucault: Power, London 2000, pp. 326-348, here p. 341. Cf. Bröckling/Krasmann/Lemke (note 15), p. 5-6.

<sup>21</sup> Theodor Bovet: Von Mann zu Mann. Eine Einführung ins Reifealter für junge Männer, Tübingen 1950, 4th ed. 1954; Theodor Bovet: Die werdende Frau. Eine Einführung ins Reifealter für junge Mädchen, Tübingen 1950, 3rd ed. 1953. Both books had a print run of over 180,000 and saw revised editions in 1968.



marriage. A couple should only contemplate birth control 'after due consideration and assessment of the question before God', and only as a temporary method to protect the mother and allow her to delay the next pregnancy.<sup>22</sup> Bovet listed a number of contraceptive methods, such as condoms and the diaphragm, spermicidal chemicals, and abstention during the fertile days of a woman's cycle. He warned that none of these methods was absolutely safe and that the Catholic Church had banned them all except the rhythm or calendar method.

Bovet was not the only voice against young people using contraceptives. He was even a more moderate one, considering the strong condemnation voiced by writer Marianne Reis in her popular sex education book for girls *An Answer for You*, that was officially approved by the Catholic Church in 1955. Only 'unscrupulous people' would use contraceptives, Reis argued, 'because they don't want to abstain from carnal lust but want to avoid the responsibility of [having] a child'.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, the author of numerous popular Catholic guidance and sex education books, Hans Wirtz (1891-1970), emphasised in *Learning Love for Marriage* that the main purpose of marriage was to have children and, therefore, condemned birth control as 'against the organising principles of life', except, in special circumstances, the rhythm method.<sup>24</sup> Reis and Wirtz' stricter views on contraception were entirely in line with Catholic doctrine as outlined in the encyclical *Casti connubii* and reemphasised by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in 1968. Responding to recent changes in moral views in many Western societies, Paul VI expressed his deep concerns that contraceptives would remove the 'incentives' young people needed 'to keep the moral law' because they were particularly 'exposed to temptation'.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Bove, Frau (note 21), p. 48. The 1968 revised editions of both books did not refer to God anymore but still required the couple to do some soul searching.

<sup>23</sup> Marianne Reis: *Antwort für dich. Ein offenes Wort an reifende Mädchen*, Donauwörth 1955, p. 46. The book had a print run of 460,000 copies within a decade and was translated into the Italian, Portuguese and Dutch.

<sup>24</sup> Hans Wirtz: *Liebe lernen für die Ehe. Von der Romantik zur Wirklichkeit*, Donauwörth 1956, pp. 53-56. The book had a print run of 128,000 copies by the mid-1960s.

<sup>25</sup> The Holy See: Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae* of the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI to His Venerable Brothers the Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops and other Local Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See, to the Clergy and Faithful of the Whole Catholic World, and to all Men of Good Will, on the Regulation of Birth, 25 Jul. 1968, section 17 ([http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html), last accessed 15 Jan. 2015).

In the mid-1960s, similar views were also expressed in the advice columns of *Bravo*, the most popular West German youth magazine at the time.<sup>26</sup> Advising in a case of teenage pregnancy, *Bravo's* agony aunt, Dr Christoph Vollmer – one of the aliases bestseller-writer Marie Louise Fischer (1922-2005) used in *Bravo* – assured readers of his unchanged strict morale stance that young people had to wait for sex until married and, therefore, refused to give advice on birth control.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, the Federal Centre for Health Education (*Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung*, BZgA) argued, in a brochure it published in 1967 to support sex education in schools, that the problem with the pill was not potential side effects but that it would wrongly encourage young people to have premarital sex, and hence boost rather than 'arrest' immoral behaviour.<sup>28</sup>

### Teaching Contraception in Sex Education, late 1960s

By this time, however, public opinion on contraceptives had begun to change. In 1967, the women's magazine *Freundin* informed West Germany's ministers for education about the outcome of an opinion poll that showed a majority of parents wanting contraception included in sex education classes in schools.<sup>29</sup> In a similar vein, the family planning organisation Pro Familia (PF) distanced itself from official policies which allowed contraceptives only for married couples and required the young and unmarried to practice sexual abstinence. PF, founded in 1952 to campaign against abortion and for birth control, had expanded its remit to include sex advice and sex education in the 1960s. In 1967, it declared that neither age nor marital status should be of relevance when advising on contraceptives: only 'the circumstances of those seeking for advice' should be considered. PF considered the risk of fostering premarital sex and promiscuity when advising adolescents on

<sup>26</sup> Sauerteig (note 12), pp. 126-134. On *Bravo* in general, Archiv der Jugendkulturen (ed.): 50 Jahre Bravo, Berlin 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2006; Teddy Hoersch (ed.): BRAVO 1956-2006, Munich 2006; Kaspar Maase: BRAVO Amerika. Erkundungen zur Jugendkultur der Bundesrepublik in den fünfziger Jahren, Hamburg 1992.

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Christoph Vollmer: Verliebt, geliebt und liebenswert: Knigge II, in: Bravo 1964, No 26, p. 43. Cf. Sauerteig (note 6), pp. 149-151; Manfred Berger: Marie Louise (Luise) Fischer, in: Kurt Franz (ed.): Kinder- und Jugendliteratur, Meitingen 2006, 27<sup>th</sup> suppl., pp. 1-24.

<sup>28</sup> BArch B304/3125, BZgA, on behalf of the Bundesministeriums für Gesundheitswesen: Beiträge zur Geschlechterziehung. Teil I: Biologie der Fortpflanzung, Cologne, 1967, p. 7. An earlier version was distributed by the BZgA's predecessor, the German Health Museum, Wiesbaden; B304/3151, Gesundheit und Gesellschaft. Was bedeutet die Familie für die Gesundheit?, Informationen zur gesunden Lebensführung 1965/66, No 4.

<sup>29</sup> BArch B304/3124, Redaktion *Freundin* to Ständige Kultusministerkonferenz, 15 Sep. 1967.

contraceptives but weighed it against abortion figures and the number of underage pregnancies. The organisation was confident that the majority of young people, although often rejecting current moral norms, would act responsibly. The real problem was that they did not know who to consult with their questions on birth control and 'were left to their own devices'.<sup>30</sup>

In the same year, towards the end of a 13-part sex education series, *Bravo* took the step of explaining different methods of birth control, including the pill which it portrayed as 'the most reliable method' that was neither harmful nor had serious side effects.<sup>31</sup> The youth magazine's moral judgment, however, remained ambiguous. On the one hand the article quoted voices advocating teaching about contraceptives in sex education for the young and listed Swedish and Danish sex education as exemplary in this respect. On the other hand, the article concluded appreciatively with a comment by an 18-year-old reader who stated that she had abstained from sex not out of fear of pregnancy but because of the moral norms of which she approved. Hence, while conforming to traditional moral norms and representing birth control as only suitable for married couples planning parenthood (intending a planned child or *Wunschkind*), and therefore unacceptable for young people exploring their sexuality before marriage, *Bravo* nevertheless provided readers with detailed descriptions of different contraceptive methods.<sup>32</sup>

Later in 1967, a new series in *Bravo*, by Stefan Holl, returned to an exploration of the moral aspect of contraception. He argued that unmarried young people should not be guided by the fear of venereal diseases or pregnancy, but rather by a sense of responsibility towards each other. Holl, who claimed to have interviewed a large number of 17- to 21-year-olds from different walks of life, did not see the moral threat as coming from them being informed about contraception, but rather from ignorance. Again, however, a statement by a 19-year-old girl revealed a different moral position towards contraception. It had impressed Holl that, although the girl took the pill, she

---

<sup>30</sup> BArch B189/2816, Eva Hobbing, Geschäftsführerin PF Hessen, to Bundesministerium für Familie und Jugend, 6 Sep. 1967. Cf. Grossmann (note 3), pp. 204-211.

<sup>31</sup> Aufklärung - der große BRAVO-Report: Was geschieht wenn..., in: *Bravo* 1967, No 25, pp. 48-51, here p. 50.

<sup>32</sup> Aufklärung (note 31), pp. 48, 50-51.

did not want to have sex with her boyfriend because of her moral conviction that sex should wait until marriage.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the ambivalence reflected here, *Bravo's* moral compass was still very much pointing in the direction of traditional sexual morality and family values, and articles remained by and large silent about details of contraceptive practices. *Bravo* did not illustrate how to use a condom or a diaphragm, for instance, and did not explain how to get hold of the pill and other contraceptives. The magazine's position towards contraception was increasingly at odds with the moral views and behaviour of the younger generation. Readers had to wait for two more years before physician Dr Renate Hauck, in the series 'Discover Your Body', eventually provided them with a detailed medical explanation of contraceptives.<sup>34</sup> She described the application of the rhythm-temperature method and the pill which she considered as the only two reliable methods. Thus, for the first time, *Bravo* offered some practical advice. Dr Hauck advocated the pill as very convenient, absolutely reliable if taken regularly, and without any serious side effects. All other methods were, in her view, less reliable and often inconvenient for young people to use. She concluded that, 'from a medical point of view, nothing would speak against responsible family planning'. However, in the introduction to her article, she also referred to the 'deeper value' only a child would bring to a marriage and conceded that a couple had to contemplate the moral and religious aspects of contraception.<sup>35</sup>

A new sex educator in *Bravo*, introduced as the young Swedish physician Dr Kirsten Lindstroem (although another alias of the all too familiar Marie Louise Fischer), promised a further shift in attitudes towards adolescent sexuality.<sup>36</sup> The first three parts of her series 'Love without Secrets' focused on how young people thought about and practiced – or did not practice – the use of contraception in their first sexual experiences. This allowed Dr Lindstroem to explain the pill, write about the dangers of the withdrawal method, and recommend condoms to boys as a fairly

---

<sup>33</sup> Stefan Holl: Mädchen, die geheimnisvollen Wesen, in: *Bravo* 1967, No 38, pp. 24-26, here p. 26.

<sup>34</sup> Dr Renate Hauck: Entdecke Deinen Körper, part 9: Was der Arzt zum 'Wunschkind' sagt, in: *Bravo* 1969, No 12. The series was printed on coloured paper and placed in the middle of each issue so that it could be taken out and collected. Cf. Sauerteig (note 6), pp. 161-162.

<sup>35</sup> Hauck (note 34).

<sup>36</sup> Sauerteig (note 6), pp. 162-163.

reliable method.<sup>37</sup> In contrast to *Bravo's* previous sex education, which had been written in an authoritative voice, Dr Lindstroem illustrated her articles with teenagers' personal experiences as allegedly shared with her. This new mode of narration often described such personal experiences as either good or bad examples, thereby attempting to connect to readers' own experiences.<sup>38</sup> In contrast to Dr Vollmer, Dr Lindstroem presented first sexual experiences before marriage as not always negative, especially if they happened in a loving relationship. Marie Louise Fischer (the author behind both of them) seemed to have acknowledged now that an increasing number of young people were sexually active well before marriage. However, at the same time she also clarified that she did not want in any way to appear to advocate premarital sex.<sup>39</sup>

Other sex educators were less ambivalent in their advice on contraception. The physician, psychotherapist and Protestant theologian, Dr Martin Goldstein (1927-2012), who – as *Bravo's* Drs Jochen Sommer and Alexander Korff – was to become one of West Germany's leading sex educators in the following decade, reflected in *Unlike Butterflies* that readers might not think it a matter of course to discuss contraception.<sup>40</sup> 'Birth control as such is already a problematic topic; what's more, many think that adolescents should not give any attention to it at all as this is a questionable issue even for married adult men and women.'<sup>41</sup> Although Goldstein thought that such views had to be taken into account he also noted that young people were requesting contraceptives and, as such, it was incumbent on him to explain birth control. However, he avoided going into details about different methods and referred readers to the available literature. He also warned that none of the current contraceptives were 'entirely satisfactory': all were, in one way or another, 'inconvenient' to use, and some, such as IUDs and coitus interruptus, carried medical risks.<sup>42</sup> Although not without risks either, he considered the pill, along with

---

<sup>37</sup> Kirsten Lindstroem [KL]: Liebe ohne Geheimnis, in: *Bravo* 1969, No 38, pp. 34-8; KL: Liebe ohne Geheimnis: Was Jungen beim ersten Erlebnis empfinden, in: *Bravo* 1969, No 39, pp. 48-52; KL: Liebe ohne Geheimnis: Was Mädchen vor dem ersten Erlebnis wissen müssen, in: *Bravo* 1969, No 40, pp. 60-64.

<sup>38</sup> On different narrative modes in *Bravo*, cf. Sauerteig (note 6), pp. 166, 168.

<sup>39</sup> KL: 'Liebe ohne Geheimnis: Was Mädchen vor dem ersten Erlebnis wissen müssen', in: *Bravo* 1969, No 40, pp. 60-64, here p. 64.

<sup>40</sup> Martin Goldstein: Anders als bei Schmetterlingen. Er und sie und ihre Liebe, [illustrations by Heinz Edelmann], Wuppertal 1967.

<sup>41</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 126.

<sup>42</sup> Goldstein (note 40), pp. 127-128.

sexual abstinence and sterilisation, as the only 'absolutely reliable way to prevent conception'.<sup>43</sup>

From the way that Goldstein carefully developed his argument one can sense that he tried to win over those with more traditional moral views. He acknowledged that many perceived the fear of pregnancy as the main deterrent against sex outside marriage and as the key argument for requiring adolescents to practice sexual abstinence. 'However', Goldstein continued, 'one should not demand an unmarried man and woman to abstain from sexual intercourse only out of fear. Not fear should determine behaviour, but understanding.'<sup>44</sup> His approach was far more pragmatic: if a couple had sex, regardless of whether they were married or not, and did not want a baby, they had to consider birth control. For Goldstein the ultimate aim of sex education was to think about 'how people could achieve health, joy and also personal happiness in their lives'.<sup>45</sup> He proposed a new sexual morality that allowed young people to experience individual pleasure even before marriage. How far the moral compass had swung by the late 1960s becomes evident in the last paragraphs of Goldstein's book where he argued that whether the pill should be made available should be determined neither by concerns about its effect on sexual morality, nor by the argument that it would allow couples to enjoy premarital sex without fears. For Goldstein the main point was that contraceptives, in particular the pill, enabled people 'to escape the inevitable connection between intercourse and reproduction', and he concluded by emphasising the 'Freedom that such achievements provide us with [...]'.<sup>46</sup>

Goldstein's sex education book was amongst, if not the first in West Germany to present contraceptives in such a positive light. It also marked the beginning of an explosion of well-illustrated sex education material. The book's graphic designer, Heinz Edelmann, was one of the leading artists at the time who was not only central to the success of *twen* magazine but also became the art director of the Beatles' 1968 animated film *Yellow Submarine*, which makes it even more surprising that *Unlike Butterflies* only saw one edition. But perhaps the book, with its different and

---

<sup>43</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 128.

<sup>44</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 126.

<sup>45</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 128.

<sup>46</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 128.

novel approach to teaching teenagers about contraception and sex, was still slightly ahead of its time.

### **Contraception as a Technology of the Self, 1970s**

Only two years later, Danish physician and youth psychiatrist Bent Claësson (\*1935) claimed in his popular sex education book *Information on Sexuality for Adolescents*: ‘In our society, sexual life is inseparably linked to the question of how to avoid having unwanted children.’<sup>47</sup> In 1970, Günter Amendt (1939-2011), an activist in the student movement in Frankfurt where he was then a doctoral student in sociology, in his widely circulated but controversial book *Sex Front*, demanded that the young should not have sex without ‘using contraceptives’.<sup>48</sup> And the authors of *Boy, Girl, Man and Woman*, a sex education book for 12- to 16-year-old teenagers, introduced the chapter on contraception by noting that the purpose of a couple having sex was primarily to experience ‘lust and joy with each other’ which they would achieve only when not worrying about an unplanned pregnancy.<sup>49</sup>

These quotes mark the emergence of a new sexual script requiring the young to be knowledgeable about reliable contraceptive technologies and to use these to avoid unwanted pregnancies. By the end of the 1960s, the previously vilified contraception had become a technology of the self that the young had to be taught – and that they had to learn. It allowed teenagers to decouple sex from reproduction and promised them sexual satisfaction without the fear of pregnancy. The reconceptualization of contraception as a technology of the self put the blame for an unwanted pregnancy on the individuals involved for not having informed themselves about reliable contraceptive methods, not having talked about and agreed which method to use, or for not having used them correctly. But it did not ascribe anymore moral guilt to teenagers for having sex. Although the greater burden rested with girls, the new script also imposed increasing responsibility on boys who were often portrayed as

---

<sup>47</sup> Bent Claësson: *Sexualinformation für Jugendliche*, [Dreng og pige, mand og kvinde, moderne sexorientering for unge, Copenhagen 1968, 8<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. 1975], [translated from the Danish by Johanna Östreich], Frankfurt/M. 1969, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1970, p. 97; with a print run of 120,000 copies in 1982.

<sup>48</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), with numerous reprints and a licenced edition by publisher Zweitausendeins. Target readership was school and university students. Attempts to have *Sex Front* banned were unsuccessful; cf. Amendt 2006 (note 10), pp. 162-166.

<sup>49</sup> Joachim Brauer et al.: *Junge, Mädchen, Mann und Frau*, vol. 2. Für 12-16jährige, Gütersloh 1972, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1974, p. 88. This schoolbook saw five editions, the last a revised one in 1987.

inappropriately pushing their girlfriends to have intercourse. Even Theodor Bovet, then in his seventies, took now a pragmatic stance. Although still arguing in his latest sex education book for teenagers, *Young People, Sex & Love*, that it would be best to wait until marriage for sex, he conceded that this was not what many young couples chose to do.<sup>50</sup> Hence, 'If one decides to have a sexual relationship before marriage, then one has to take it upon oneself to practice contraception.'<sup>51</sup>

How contentious it remained at the time, though, to mediate contraceptive knowledge in sex education for teenagers becomes obvious when one considers the debates generated by the *Sex Education Atlas*, a schoolbook for biology classes published in 1969 by the Federal Centre for Health Education on behalf of the Federal Minister for Health. The aim of the *Atlas* was to impart 'scientifically based factual information' about sexuality to children over the age of 14, as Social-Democratic Health Minister Käthe Strobel wrote in her foreword.<sup>52</sup> Focussed on medical facts, the *Atlas* explained in technical language and with illustrations how different contraceptive methods worked, and what their failure rates were, with the pill described as the safest method.<sup>53</sup> Cross-section drawings illustrated the application of the cervical cap, intra-uterine device and chemical contraceptives. However, a drawing of an erect penis with a condom was removed from earlier drafts,<sup>54</sup> a decision that some commentators found incomprehensible and not in line with the times.<sup>55</sup> The *Atlas* was completely silent about social and cultural aspects of contraceptive technologies and, for instance, did not inform how to obtain them or how to negotiate their usage with a partner. A fundamentally revised second edition of the *Atlas*, published in 1974 after years of political squabbling,<sup>56</sup> included a list of

---

<sup>50</sup> Theodor Bovet: *Junge Leute, Sex & Liebe. Biologische und psychologische Informationen für Jungen und Mädchen ab 15*, Tübingen 1971, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. 1972, pp. 84-90. A third edition was published in 1978 with an overall print run of 31,000 copies.

<sup>51</sup> Bovet (note 50), p. 98.

<sup>52</sup> BZgA: *Sexualkunde-Atlas. Biologische Informationen zur Sexualität des Menschen*, Opladen, 1969, p. 5. Cf. Sauerteig (note 2), pp. 141-145.

<sup>53</sup> BZgA (note 52), pp. 34-39.

<sup>54</sup> BZgA (note 52), p. 39; BArch B310/1108, Christa Topfmeier: 2b, Entwurf: *Sexualkunde Atlas*, 1969. It is not documented why the image was removed.

<sup>55</sup> BArch B310/1114, Otto Bantje, Bremen's Senator for Education, 13 Nov. 1969; B310/1110, Gertrud Mellinghaus, 8 Jul. 1969; B310/1110, Karl Plehn, Beratungsstelle Sexualerziehung am Schulpraktischen Institut, Bremen, 18 Mar. 1970, about comments from pupils in Bremen.

<sup>56</sup> BArch B310/1109, 1113.



addresses for PF's advice centres and also a still contentious drawing of how to unroll a condom over an erect penis.<sup>57</sup>

The *Atlas* caused much controversy and public debate but the first edition of 100,000 copies sold out within less than a year. Many commentators from both ends of the moral and political spectrum criticised the *Atlas* as too biological and not addressing emotional and moral aspects of sexuality.<sup>58</sup> Whereas some commentators, including some physicians, condemned the *Atlas* because it informed schoolchildren about contraception, thereby sexualising them and contributing to a further moral decline,<sup>59</sup> others praised it specifically for addressing this topic.<sup>60</sup> Teachers, although generally reporting mixed responses by their pupils when testing the *Atlas* in the classroom, noted that schoolchildren welcomed the information about birth control.<sup>61</sup>

In contrast to the *Sex Education Atlas*, authors such as sixty-eighters Amendt and Peter Jacobi (a primary school teacher), youth psychologist Rolf Berger, and the physician Claësson, explained at great length the advantages, disadvantages and risks of different birth control methods.<sup>62</sup> Considering the high costs of the pill, Amendt, inspired by the demands of the pupils' movement, wanted the pill to be made available for free. However, until access to the pill became easier he believed the condom would remain the most commonly used contraceptive.<sup>63</sup> The very popular but controversial German version of the radical *Little Red Schoolbook*

<sup>57</sup> BZgA (note 52), 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. 1974, pp. 34, 38. A report on behalf of Berlin's Senator for Education considered the image 'needless', B310/1103, Gutachten, 18 Oct. 1974.

<sup>58</sup> Sauerteig (note 2), p. 145.

<sup>59</sup> BArch B310/1114, Dr Parow-Souchon, 1 Mar. 1970; Hubert Außendorf, 10 Mar. 1970; Benedicta von Bitter, 18 Jul. 1969; Katholisches Zentralinstitut für Ehe- und Familienfragen und Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Katholische Familienbildung, n.d.; B310/1115, Siegfried Ernst (physician and City Councillor in Ulm), 8 Apr. 1972; B310/1109, Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Unterricht und Kultus to Leske Verlag, 23 Jan. 1970, with seven attached expert reports on the suitability of the *Atlas* for Bavarian schools.

<sup>60</sup> BArch B310/1114, Pastor Hermann Bergengruen, Ev. Luth. Pfarramt der Friedenskirche, Maschen, 30 Sep. 1969; B310/1110, Karl Plehn, Beratungsstelle Sexualerziehung am Schulpraktischen Institut, Bremen, 18 Mar. 1970.

<sup>61</sup> BArch B310/1114, report from Franz-Haniel-Gymnasium, Homberg, 20 Jul. 1970; B310/1115, report from Realschule Otterndorf, 2 Jan. 1970; B310/1109, Niedersächsischer Kultusminister to BZgA, 23 Feb. 1970, with three reports from schools which had tested the *Atlas* in classroom teaching.

<sup>62</sup> Claësson (note 47), pp. 97-118; Amendt 1970 (note 10), pp. 38-46; Rolf Berger, Ota Richter: *Erste Liebe, erster Sex. Intimreport für und über die Teenager*, [photos by Ota Richter], Munich 1971, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. 1971, pp. 71-84 (sections of the book were also serialised in *Bravo* in 1971); Peter Jacobi: *Aufklärung. Was Jugendliche über Sexualität wissen sollten*, [German translation and adaptation of *Samspel*, Stockholm 1967, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. 1968], Weinheim et al., 1968, pp. 33-58.

<sup>63</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 45.

suggested that because there were no condom machines at schools students should bulk-buy and trade condoms cheaply amongst themselves.<sup>64</sup>

During the 1970s, *Bravo* became an important source for shaping young people's sexual knowledge as the youth magazine reached a readership of approximately 60 percent of West German teenagers.<sup>65</sup> After Martin Goldstein took over as the new agony aunt (under the alias of Dr Jochen Sommer) in 1969 and started to write weekly sex advice articles under the alias of Dr Alexander Korff two years later,<sup>66</sup> *Bravo* turned into a key mediator of contraception as a technology of the self. 'Bad experience taught us that at least once a year we cannot avoid this topic', Dr Korff explained.<sup>67</sup> Hence, year after year, *Bravo* provided detailed and illustrated contraception scripts to guide young people in how to negotiate the minefield of birth control, giving them very practical tips on how, for instance, to unroll a condom, to get the pill, to apply chemical contraceptives, or to manage the temperature method.<sup>68</sup>

The new sexual script that allowed teenagers to explore sex, but which at the same time required them to know about and self-manage the technology of contraception effectively, played a key role in *Bravo*'s narratives. In one of his first articles for *Bravo*, Dr Korff instructed readers to be well informed about contraception so that they could 'act in a considered and prepared manner', because thinking about contraception would demonstrate responsibility for the partner and a potential baby. This responsibility required the young to accept the inconveniences of discussing with the partner which method of birth control to use, of equipping themselves with a reliable contraceptive in advance, and of using it correctly when having sex.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Bo Dan Andersen, Søren Hansen, Jesper Jensen: *Das kleine rote Schülerbuch*, [Den lille røde bog for skoleelever, Copenhagen 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1969] [German translation and adaptation by Peter Jacobi, Lutz Maier], Frankfurt/M. 1970, p. 85. The book had a print run of over 150,000 copies within the first two years of publication.

<sup>65</sup> Sauerteig (note 12), pp. 123-124.

<sup>66</sup> Sauerteig (note 12), pp. 140-141.

<sup>67</sup> Alexander Korff [AK]: *An Wolfgangs Geburtstag ist es passiert*, in: *Bravo* 1974, No 39.

<sup>68</sup> E.g. AK: *So macht die Liebe keinen Kummer*, in: *Bravo* 1972, No 13; *Neue Foto-Love-Story. Liebe am Nachmittag*, in: *Bravo* 1972, No 31-34; AK: *Aufklärung für Fortgeschrittene. Empfängnisverhütung*, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 10; AK: *Wer noch kein Kind haben will, muß über die Verhütungsmethoden Bescheid wissen. Hier alle auf einen Überblick*, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 41; *Eine Informations-Serie in Bildern*, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 46-52; AK, *Wolfgangs Geburtstag* (note 67); AK: *Die frechen Eindringler*, in: *Bravo* 1979, No 22; AK: *Verhütung geht beide Partner an*, in: *Bravo* 1979, No 48; AK: *Was kann man tun, damit nichts 'passiert'?*, in: *Bravo* 1980, No 26.

<sup>69</sup> AK: *Wie kann man ohne Angst lieben?*, in: *Bravo* 1971, No 12.

## Negotiating Access to Contraception

Accessing contraceptives, and in particular the pill, remained difficult for teenagers during the early 1970s even though they could obtain them from one of the local branches of PF, ask for them in a pharmacy – however with all the embarrassment this may have entailed –, or buy a box of condoms more anonymously from one of an increasing number of vending machines (though these condoms were not guaranteed to be of high quality). From the time when the pill became available in the early 1960s, the minimum age at which it could be taken by a girl had been a hotly debated issue.<sup>70</sup> Hence, it was very difficult, if not impossible, for teenage girls to get a prescription as many physicians opposed prescribing the pill to unmarried women and girls under the age of 18.<sup>71</sup> Medical experts and other commentators raised medical arguments, such as menstruation not being regular yet, the ovaries not fully developed, and growth not completed. But at the heart of the debate were moral concerns. Many commentators, including some sex educators, believed that making the pill available to teenage girls would remove their fear of getting pregnant and incite them to have sex. Some physicians perceived the pill as a symbol for the sexualisation of society and cultural degeneration. This view was shared by the over 400 medical practitioners and scientists who, in 1964, signed a petition to the Federal Health Minister concerning contraception, the so-called *Ulm Memorandum*. The *Ulm Memorandum* demanded that the ban on public advertising of contraceptives should not only be retained but extended to cover any indirect advertising, such as including an image of a box of the pill in a magazine article on contraception.<sup>72</sup> About half of West Germany's physicians, however, rejected such views and supported a pragmatic approach, which accepted that it was increasingly common for teenagers to have sex and, hence, that they were in need of effective contraception. Nevertheless, in 1970 the German Medical Association (*Bundesärztekammer*) published official guidelines which warned physicians against prescribing the pill to girls under the age of 16, as the law protected them against

<sup>70</sup> Silies (note 6), pp. 161-201.

<sup>71</sup> Günter van Waasen: Wenn die Tochter die Pille möchte, in: *Eltern* 1968, No 7, pp. 14-16; Pille für junge Mädchen, in: *Eltern* 1972, No 12, pp. 24-29; Heider (note 7), p. 16; cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 171-181, 197-201, 213-216.

<sup>72</sup> Siegfried Ernst: Ulmer Denkschrift. Zur Frage der Geburtenbeschränkung, in: *Deutsches Ärzteblatt* 62, 1965, pp. 2138-2141. Cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 209-213.

sexual seduction. For girls aged 16 to 18 the Medial Association recommended that doctors should require parental consent.<sup>73</sup>

Teenagers were confronted with confusing messages about the availability of contraception for them: on the one hand they were encouraged to use it to avoid unwanted pregnancies, but then were advised in *Bravo* that physicians were not allowed to prescribe the pill to girls under the age of 16, and to those aged between 16 and 18 only with parental consent.<sup>74</sup> Although a new sex education series, 'Girls at the Gynaecologist' by Dr med Wolf Romberg, included narratives of girls having the pill prescribed, the articles emphasised that parental consent was given and explained how such consent was achieved. In general, Dr Romberg appeared more comfortable with recommending condoms or the temperature method, which he suggested was reliable if the girl took measurements meticulously (a view that was shared by some sex educators whereas others considered this method too unreliable for young girls).<sup>75</sup>

Similar narratives about the pill can be found in other youth magazines, for instance in *'ran* (published by the German Trade Union Federation) which, however, also pointed out that some physicians *would* prescribe the pill without asking for parental consent. The magazine also gave readers hints how to find such doctors via organisations such as PF.<sup>76</sup> Liberal Member of Parliament, physician Dr Hedda Heuser (1926-2007), argued in *Jasmin*, a magazine for young women, that she would prescribe the pill to young girls because this was a lesser evil than the effects of an unwanted pregnancy.<sup>77</sup> Such a pragmatic approach was also propagated by some pharmaceutical companies. The Catholic *Volkswartbund*, an ultra-conservative moral purity organisation, complained about an unnamed Darmstadt based drugs company – most likely Merk – which used the slogan, 'So that the kid does not get

<sup>73</sup> Ovulationshemmer für junge Mädchen? Medizinische und rechtliche Gründe, in: Deutsches Ärzteblatt 67, 1970, pp. 2907-2908. Cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 217-219.

<sup>74</sup> Wolf Romberg [WR]: Kriegt man mit 16 die Pille?, in: Bravo 1970, No 17; WR: Meine kleine Schwester braucht die Pille, in: Bravo 1970, No 34.

<sup>75</sup> WR, Kriegt man mit 16 (note 74); WR, Meine kleine Schwester (note 74); WR: Liebe nach dem Thermometer?, in: Bravo 1970, No 22; WR: Was Jungen über Empfängnisverhütung wissen müssen, in: Bravo 1970, No 42. Describing the temperature method as safe: BZgA (note 52), p. 34; Bovet (note 50), pp. 93-94. Considering it as not sufficiently reliable for young girls: Claësson (note 47), pp. 99-100; Brauer et al. (note 49), pp. 103-104; Klaus Franke: Empfängnisverhütung für Jugendliche, Stuttgart, Berlin 1971, p. 19-21.

<sup>76</sup> Barbara Kleine, Dore Vieweg: 'Die Pille ist kein Himbeersaft', in: 'ran 2, 1972, No 9, pp. 40-41.

<sup>77</sup> Hier erzählt Dr. med. Hedda Heuser, FDP-Mitglied des Bundestages, warum sie dafür ist, daß auch ledige junge Mädchen die Anti-Baby-Pille bekommen, in: Jasmin 1968, No 9, pp. 12-13.

home with a kid' to promote its birth control pill.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, as the recollections of some people of their adolescent years suggest, there are also narratives of pragmatic and supportive mothers. 22-year-old Karin B., for instance, remembered that she had been unable to discuss any sexual matters with her mother, but still got the pill through her when they were living in Duisburg in the early 1960s.<sup>79</sup> Eva-Maria Silies concluded that mothers seemed to have been more appreciative of their daughters' problems with contraception than one would expect considering their often bashful attitudes towards sex education.<sup>80</sup>

Responding to the demands of the pupils' movement to make access to the pill easier for teenagers, the 'political lifestyle magazine' of the student movement, *Konkret*,<sup>81</sup> started a campaign in the summer of 1968 to collect addresses of physicians who would prescribe the pill to unmarried girls and published lists of organisations to which women could turn for help. The campaign was a great success, but the *Konkret* office became overwhelmed with enquiries from readers asking for advice and help how to get the pill.<sup>82</sup> Likewise, Amendt, Berger and Jacobi advised teenage girls to contact student organisations at universities such as General Students' Committees (ASTAs), the Socialist German Student Union (SDS), or other left-wing groups, as they could provide names of physicians sympathetic to prescribing the pill to teenagers.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, Dr Korff in *Bravo* and other commentators emphasised that the guidelines by the Medical Association were actually not legally binding.<sup>84</sup> Federal Prosecutor (*Bundesanwalt*), Dr Max Kohlhaas

<sup>78</sup> Werbung für Ovulationshemmer scharf kritisiert, in: *Concepte* 6, 1970, No 8/9, p. 37.

<sup>79</sup> Gruppe Sexpol-Nord (Westberlin): Sexpol-Protokolle, in: Hans-Peter Gente (ed.): *Marxismus, Psychoanalyse, Sexpol*, vol. 2, Frankfurt/M. 1972, pp. 10-49, here p. 14. The Sexpol Group North was founded in Berlin in the autumn of 1968 and existed for a good year. Reports of their members, mostly apprentices or young workers, were first published in the magazine *Konkret*. Further narratives of pragmatic thinking mother can be found in magazines, e.g. *Die Pille schon ab 14?*, in: *Eltern* 1973, No 8, pp. 16-22, here p. 18. Silies (note 6), pp. 299-301, found such a pragmatic approach also reflected in the experiences of some of her informants.

<sup>80</sup> Silies (note 6), p. 301.

<sup>81</sup> Siegfried (note 10), pp. 281, 294-310, 529-540.

<sup>82</sup> Alle reden von der Pille. Wir nicht. (Wir verschaffen sie Ihnen), in: *Konkret* 1968, No 7, pp. 28-31; Pille für jedes Mädchen. Die Konkret-Aktion wird fortgesetzt, in: *Konkret* 1969, No 8, p. 55; Konkret-Aktion. Pille für jedes Mädchen, in: *Konkret* 1968, No 12, p. 49. Cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 134-137, 165-167.

<sup>83</sup> Jacobi (note 62), pp. 67-80, with a list of sex advice centres, including PF; Claësson (note 47), 5<sup>th</sup> rev. ed., 1976, pp. 160-163, with an updated address list. Cf. Gass-Bolm, *Revolution* (note 10), p. 122.

<sup>84</sup> AK, *Wie kann man* (note 69); Franke (note 75), p. 36; AK: *Im Namen der Liebe*, in: *Bravo* 1975, No 5; Oswald Spiegel: *Wann ist ein Mädchen reif für die Pille?*, in: *Bravo* 1976, No 29, pp. 20-23. Cf. Claudia Halstrick: *Juristische Aspekte der Mädchensprechstunde. Verordnung von Kontrazeptiva*, in: *Frauenarzt* 46, 2005, pp. 660-663, here p. 660.

(1909-1985), who the popular monthly magazine *Eltern* (Parents) had consulted, only recognised an obligation on the part of physicians to inform parents when the girl was under the age of 14; in cases of older girls, physicians could even be prosecuted for a breach of medical confidentiality if they informed the girl's parents.<sup>85</sup> Despite this advice, *Eltern* still asserted that it was only 'legal' for girls over the age of 16 to take the pill, and then only with parental consent, but conceded that the guidelines would not stop young girls to take the pill.<sup>86</sup>

Indeed, *Eltern* pre-published the results of Sigusch and Schmidt's study of the sexual behaviour of 16- to 17-year-old pupils which suggested that the pill was the most popular contraceptive among teenagers of this age group (42 percent), followed by condoms (26 percent), coitus interruptus (18 percent), the calendar method (9 percent), and chemical contraceptives (4 percent).<sup>87</sup> Although other surveys indicated that the pill might not have been as widely used by young teenage girls, they also confirmed that young girls did find ways to access the pill. The results of a survey of schoolgirls at gymnasiums in Schleswig-Holstein, which again was picked up by *Eltern* in 1972, stated that in 1970 0.4 percent of 14-year-old and 1.5 percent of 15-year-old girls took the pill; and of the 16- to 17-year-old girls about 11 percent took the pill – a figure that was confirmed by Sigusch and Schmidt's larger survey of 16- and 17-year-old schoolchildren in West German cities.<sup>88</sup> The following year, *Eltern* claimed that these figures had doubled to 0.9 percent of 14-year-old, 3.2 percent of 15-year-old, and 17.8 percent of 16-year-old girls taking the pill in Schleswig-Holstein. By bringing these figures to the attention of a wider public, the magazine created a certain perception about how common the use of the pill and other contraceptives was amongst West German teenagers at the beginning of the 1970s. The same article in *Eltern* quoted a 15-year-old schoolgirl from Hamburg who asserted that at her school 'it was courteous' to take the pill – girls who would not

<sup>85</sup> Pille für junge Mädchen (note 71), pp. 26-27; Pille schon ab 14? (note 79), p. 21.

<sup>86</sup> Pille schon ab 14? (note 79), p. 19; Lajos Schöne: Von Ärzten empfohlen. Der Verhütungsplan für junge Mädchen, in: *Eltern* 1975, No 5, pp. 97-100.

<sup>87</sup> Sexualreport [part 1], in: *Eltern* 1970, No 10, pp. 34-39, here p. 38. *Eltern* appeared to have underestimated the overall proportion of teenagers who used contraceptives: about 70 percent according to *Eltern* whereas Sigusch, Schmidt (note 7), p. 171, claimed that 89 percent of boys and girls had used some form of contraception during the past 12 months.

<sup>88</sup> W. Hallermann, J. Schwarz, R. Wille: Keine Ovulationshemmer für junge Mädchen?, in: *Schleswig-holsteinisches Ärzteblatt* 24, 1971, pp. 223-228, here p. 227; Pille für junge Mädchen (note 71), pp. 26-27; Sigusch, Schmidt (note 7), p. 33. Hallermann, Schwarz, Wille also found out that 24.6 percent of the 18-year-old and 23.8 percent of the 19-year-old girls took the pill.

were regarded as 'antiquated and stupid'.<sup>89</sup> Whereas some girls found a physician who prescribed them the pill, even without parental consent, other girls sought the pill through backchannels without prior medical examination which sex educators continually tried to discourage them from doing.<sup>90</sup>

Overall, during the 1970s, access to contraceptives, including the pill, as well as practical tips about how to use them, what the costs were, and how to obtain them, became easier for teenagers. Dr Korff advised teenagers how to get around legal restrictions against selling contraceptives to those under the age of 18.<sup>91</sup> The German Medical Association eventually revised its guidelines on the pill in 1975. References to age-groups and the legal concerns were removed and medical recommendations for doctors when prescribing the pill to teenage girls were added.<sup>92</sup> Contraception narratives in *Bravo* included numerous examples of girls having the pill prescribed and young people negotiating the task of buying condoms or chemical contraceptives in pharmacies.<sup>93</sup> Adverts quite regularly promoted chemical contraceptives, such as the pessary Patentex oval<sup>®</sup>, as particularly suitable for teenage girls;<sup>94</sup> occasional adverts by the mail order company Beate-Uhse recommended condoms to boys.<sup>95</sup>

Authors of sex education material also addressed the difficulties young people experienced, such as embarrassment when requesting a box of condoms or a chemical contraceptive at a pharmacy, or being intrusively quizzed by their physician when asking for the pill.<sup>96</sup> Dr Korff proposed some phrases young people could use

---

<sup>89</sup> Pille schon ab 14? (note 79), pp. 18-19.

<sup>90</sup> Warum wir unseren Müttern nichts von der Pille sagen, in: Eltern 1970, No 2, pp. 84-86, 91, here p. 86; Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 43; Berger/Richter (note 62), pp. 72-73; Brauer et al. (note 49), p. 99; Spiegel (note 84); Aufklärung in Bildern, in: Bravo 1976, No 47-48; Peter Figge [et al.]: Betrifft: Sexualität. Materialien zur Sexualerziehung im Medienverbund für Jugendliche, Eltern und Pädagogen, Braunschweig 1977, pp. 13-14; AK, Eindringer (note 68); Elisabeth Müller-Gaertner: Pille ja oder nein? 6 Mädchen diskutieren mit BRAVO, in: Bravo 1980, No 21. Cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 302, 307, with testimonies of women who as teenagers got a prescription for the pill from a physician without parental consent or obtained the pill without medical examination.

<sup>91</sup> AK, Aufklärung für Fortgeschrittene (note 68).

<sup>92</sup> Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesärztekammer: Leitsätze zur Verordnung oraler Kontrazeptiva, in: Deutsches Ärzteblatt 72, 1975, pp. 2521-2523.

<sup>93</sup> E.g. AK, Wolfgangs Geburtstag (note 67).

<sup>94</sup> E.g. in Bravo 1973, No 12; 1974, No 1, 9, 12, 38, 46; 1975, No 5, 10, 39; 1976, No 13, 25; 1978, No 37, 51.

<sup>95</sup> E.g. in Bravo 1974, No 21.

<sup>96</sup> Liebe ohne Folgen, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: Bravo 1973, No 46; Liebe ohne Angst, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: Bravo 1973, No 47; Aus Liebe zum Frauenarzt, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: Bravo 1973, No 50; AK: Die Jungen und das erste Mal, in: Bravo 1974, No 28; AK: Ohne Angst ist Liebe am schönsten, in: Bravo 1979, No 21. Cf. Silies (note 6), pp. 305-308, 311, for

when buying contraceptives. A boy, he suggested, could say ‘One box of sealed condoms, for about 2 Mark, please’, and for a girl he recommended the phrase, ‘I would like to have a vaginal agent for birth control; but not those basic foam tablets but these pessaries.’<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, some sex education material began to visualise contraceptive skills. For instance, in contrast to the *Sex Education Atlas*, Claësson’s book showed in a series of black-and-white photos how a man – sitting naked on a bed with a naked woman lying behind him – unrolled a condom over his erect penis and demonstrated in a series of six cross-section drawings how to position a diaphragm.<sup>98</sup> Such visual material was important to explain the contraceptive skills teenagers had to be able to master before their first intercourse.

### Practicing Contraception

This constant flow of information about contraception emphasised to young people the importance of certain contraceptive technologies, and of learning and practising the essential set of skills to apply them effectively. The pill in particular required adherence to the regime of a strict schedule – when to take it and what to do in case of illness, or if a girl forgot to take it on time.<sup>99</sup> Writer Micha Lentz (\*1941) in her sex education book for girls *What Girls Don’t Dare to Ask*, mentioned a special ‘pill alarm-clock’ that girls could buy to alert them when it was time to take their pill.<sup>100</sup> Teenagers were also expected to learn how to use other contraceptives *and* practice these skills so that they were ready to apply them during their first intercourse

---

testimonies of women who as teenagers had had negative experiences when medically examined and felt morally judged by male physicians.

<sup>97</sup> AK: Wenn Liebe zum Abenteuer wird, in: Bravo 1979, No 47.

<sup>98</sup> Claësson (note 47), pp. 104-105, 110. Other sex education material with photos depicting a condom being unrolled over a penis include: Berger/Richter (note 62), p. 79; Brauer et al. (note 49), p. 92; Die sachliche Seite der sexuellen Liebe, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: Bravo 1973, No 48; Aufklärung in Bildern, in: Bravo 1976, No 51 with two sequences of images depicting how to fit a condom and how to insert a contraceptive suppository that Bravo had copied from a sex education brochure by the BZgA; Figge et al. (note 90), p. 18; BZgA (on behalf of the Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit): Muß-Ehen muß es nicht geben. Was Mädchen und Jungen wissen möchten, die sich zu jung für ein Baby fühlen, Cologne 1979, p. 19.

<sup>99</sup> E.g. BZgA (note 52), p. 36; Zehn Jahre Pille in Deutschland. 50 Fragen und Antworten zur Pille, in: Eltern 1969, No 4, pp. 99-106, here pp. 102-103; Claësson (note 47), p. 114; Die Pille, die jungen Mädchen und die ahnungslosen Mütter, in: Eltern 1971, No 11, p. 62; Bovet (note 50), p. 94; Brauer et al. (note 49), p. 98; Liebe mit der Pille, in collaboration with the BZgA, in: Bravo 1973, No 51; AK, Wolfgang’s Geburtstag (note 67); Figge et al. (note 90), pp. 18-19; BZgA, Muß-Ehen (note 98), pp. 19, 25; Schering AG, in collaboration with Gerhard Döring, Viola Frick-Bruder (eds): Was ein Mann und eine Frau heute über Empfängnisregelung wissen möchten. Alles über die neuesten Erkenntnisse der Wissenschaft und Erfahrungen aus der Praxis, Berlin 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1979, pp. 20-21.

<sup>100</sup> Mischa Lentz: Was Mädchen nicht zu fragen wagen, Munich 1978, p. 106.



without making mistakes or looking stupid.<sup>101</sup> Urging teenagers to be well prepared for having sex, Dr Korff wrote about girls who tried out chemical contraceptives in the privacy of their bedrooms: 'That a girl only waits and then surrenders herself [to a boy] is dangerous nonsense. Every [girl] has to be careful and that starts with thinking about how an unexpected sexual intercourse does not end in an unwanted pregnancy. [...] It is your responsibility as an enlightened girl to be prepared [...].'<sup>102</sup> Despite having already had three boyfriends, the above mentioned 15-year-old schoolgirl from Hamburg maintained she did not have sex with them, '[b]ut one never knows'. She therefore wanted to be prepared and, with the consent of her mother, took the pill which she got through an older friend.<sup>103</sup>

Likewise, Claësson suggested that teenage boys should practise using condoms when masturbating, and both he and Dr Korff advised teenagers always to carry some contraceptives with them.<sup>104</sup> The *Little Red School Book* recommended that girls as well should equip themselves with condoms and not rely on boys to have them at hand when needed.<sup>105</sup> Dr Korff pleaded with his readers: 'I call upon you to be enlightened as thoroughly as possible so that you can act in a considered and prepared manner. Contraception [means] to be responsible towards the partner, oneself and the baby-to-be.'<sup>106</sup>

During the 1970s, most sex educators and many popular magazines such as *Bravo* or *Eltern* praised the pill as the safest contraceptive that would allow young people, in particular girls, to explore their sexuality without the fear of pregnancy. However, they also discussed the implications of the pill. Some narratives about the pill, for instance, suggested girls might reject it because they were afraid of alleged side effects such as weight gain, reduced libido, or sterility.<sup>107</sup> Although sex educators reassured girls that taking the pill was harmless if prescribed and monitored by a physician, discussion of its side effects continued in sex education material.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> AK, Aufklärung für Fortgeschrittene (note 68); AK, Wer noch kein Kind haben will (note 68).

<sup>102</sup> AK, So macht die Liebe (note 68); cf. AK, Was kann man tun (note 68).

<sup>103</sup> Pille schon ab 14? (note 79), p. 18.

<sup>104</sup> Claësson (note 47), p. 106; AK, So macht die Liebe (note 68); similar advice in BZgA, Muß-Ehen (note 98), p. 37.

<sup>105</sup> Andersen/Hansen/Jensen (note 64), p. 85; similar advice in Franke (note 75), pp. 24-25.

<sup>106</sup> AK, Wie kann man (note 69).

<sup>107</sup> Berger/Richter (note 62), p. 72; Figge et al. (note 90), p. 13.

<sup>108</sup> Claësson (note 47), pp. 114-115; Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 43; Berger/Richter (note 62), pp. 72-73, 75; Bovet (note 50), pp. 94-95; Franke (note 75), pp. 32-34; Figge et al. (note 90), p. 14; BZgA,

The pill had created both new expectations and pressures for teenagers. Commentators from the '68-movement who initially had hailed the pill as 'liberating' sexuality became increasingly critical, or at least ambivalent, because of political reasons. Inspired by the second wave of feminism, women complained about a loss of authenticity in their sexual experiences when on the pill, and perceived it as a technology that predominantly benefited male sexuality and perpetuated women's suppression in society.<sup>109</sup> Such concerns were also reflected in sex education material. Physician Dr Klaus Franke, who in general was very sympathetic to making contraceptives available to teenagers, warned in his sex education book *Contraception for Adolescents* that 'Those who take the pill as a precaution would seek having sex' even when not in love.<sup>110</sup> The three authors of *Who Is In For a Penny ... Has to be In For Intimacy* explained that, until the introduction of the pill, a girl could use her fear of getting pregnant as a legitimate argument to fend off her boyfriend's sexual advances. But this argument would 'not count anymore today' and girls were forced to clearly state if they did not want sex.<sup>111</sup> A number of illustrated case studies indicated how teenagers might experience such dilemmas. 16-year-old Heidrun, for instance, rejected her boyfriend's demands to take the pill because she feared he would pressure her to have sex with him, which she did not feel ready for yet. At the same time she was concerned her boyfriend might think that she would not love him anymore if she refused to have sex with him.<sup>112</sup>

A few years earlier, Amendt's *Sex Front* had already warned boys not to expect or even demand their girlfriends take the pill. Even if she could get the pill, a girl might not be happy to take it because she was suspicious of a pharmaceutical industry that had been responsible for dangerous drugs like thalidomide.<sup>113</sup> Amendt then quoted in length from an article published in 1969 by the Federal Board of the Action Centre for Independent and Socialist School Students (AUSS) – founded on the initiative of

---

Muß-Ehen (note 98), pp. 20-23; Schering AG (note 99), pp. 22-27; Günter Amendt: *Das Sex Buch*, Dortmund 1979, pp. 85, 87; Müller-Gaertner (note 90).

<sup>109</sup> Silies (note 6), pp. 381-412.

<sup>110</sup> Franke (note 75), p. 35.

<sup>111</sup> Denise de Boer, Heinz Schneider, Karlheinz Walter: *Wer 'a' sagt ... muss auch zärtlich sein. Fragen und Antworten zu Sexualproblemen*, Braunschweig 1975, p. 28.

<sup>112</sup> de Boer, Schneider, Walter (note 111).

<sup>113</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), pp. 42-43. On the thalidomide scandal in West Germany during the early 1960s, Willibald Steinmetz: *Ungewollte Politisierung durch die Medien? Die Contergan-Affäre*, in: Bernd Weisbrod (ed.): *Die Politik der Öffentlichkeit - Die Öffentlichkeit der Politik*, Göttingen 2003, pp. 195-228.

the SDS in 1967 to unite left-wing antiauthoritarian protest groups of the pupils' movement at (predominantly secondary) schools – which described the pill as part of capitalism's sexual exploitation. The pill would make the female body freely available and deprived girls of their 'last natural argument' if they did not want to have sex. However, at the same time, AUSS still demanded free access to the pill, but only for political reasons and not for the purpose of sexual reform.<sup>114</sup> However, Amendt appeared not to be convinced by this anti-capitalist stance. Instead he emphasised the great advantages the pill brought for girls who could 'get rid of their insecurity and fear of a possible pregnancy' and 'choose a guy with the same confidence as the other way round'.<sup>115</sup> In the end, Amendt's readers were left confused about what to think of the pill: was it politically alright to take it or not? This was a feeling that resonated with mixed comments about the pill by other members of the 68-movement.<sup>116</sup>

### The 'Negotiation Ethics' of the 1970s

During the 1970s, a key message reiterated in sex education material, in particular in popular magazines such as *Bravo*, was that young people had to learn how to negotiate contraception and their sexual activities with their partner. Goldstein had postulated already in 1967 that birth control always had to be the concern of both partners, hence, as other sex educators also warned, teenagers must never rely tacitly on their partner to have taken care of contraception.<sup>117</sup> Over and over again the concept of negotiation ethics was popularised in various narrative forms in sex education material written for teenagers, including illustrated photo stories in *Bravo*.<sup>118</sup> Micha Lentz advised that both partners had to be comfortable with the

<sup>114</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 72; Manfred Mohl, Horst-Dieter Zahn: Thesen zur Sexualkampagne, AUSS Info, 1969, No 5/6, p. 7 (<http://www.mao-projekt.de/BRD/VDS/AUSS.shtml>, last accessed 01 Oct. 2014). Cf. Siegfried (note 10), pp. 498-506; Gass-Bolm, Revolution (note 10), pp. 119-132; Schildt (note 10).

<sup>115</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 45.

<sup>116</sup> Silies (note 6), pp. 361-375.

<sup>117</sup> Goldstein (note 40), p. 128; Amendt 1970 (note 10), p. 41; Franke (note 75), p. 9; Brigitte Blobel, Roswitha Schütz: Der ehrliche Aufklärungsreport. So lieben Jungen ab 16, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 25; AK, Wer noch kein Kind haben will (note 68); AK, Wolfgang's Geburtstag (note 67); AK: Im Namen der Liebe. Allein mit einem Kind, in: *Bravo* 1975, No 13; AK, Ohne Angst (note 96).

<sup>118</sup> Amendt 1970 (note 10), pp. 41-2; Bovet (note 50), p. 91; Dr Jochen Sommer [JS]: Was Dich bewegt ...: An welchen Tagen hat die Liebe Folgen?, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 6; Liebe ohne Folgen (note 96); Aufklärung in Bildern. Willst Du mit mir schlafen?, in: *Bravo* 1976, No 39; Aufklärung in Bildern. Nimmst du eigentlich die Pille?, in: *Bravo* 1976, No 43; Figge et al. (note 90), pp. 17-19; BRAVO-

contraceptive method they jointly chose, as the method ‘needs to suit body and feeling of both of them’.<sup>119</sup> To facilitate negotiations about contraception Dr Korff suggested a phrase teenagers could use: ‘Well fellow (*Alter*), what are we doing about not having a baby?’ – and recommended practising this in front of a mirror.<sup>120</sup> ‘To be properly in the know and to look ahead responsibly is the gift one can hand to oneself and to one’s partner’, Dr Korff concluded one of his numerous articles on contraception.<sup>121</sup> If no such conversation was possible between teenage couples then – as *Bravo*’s agony aunt, Dr Jochen Sommer, advised 16-year-old Anita from Oberhausen – it would be ‘too early for you to think of it [having sex]’.<sup>122</sup> Hence, young people had to learn how to master the technology of contraception which included: to be well informed about contraceptive methods; to practice contraceptive skills; and to rehearse how to negotiate sexual encounters with a partner. Repeatedly Dr Korff demanded that teenagers who were not confident about contraceptive technology should abstain from intercourse as they appeared not yet to be mature enough.<sup>123</sup>

At the same time, sex educators portrayed teenage pregnancy as the consequence of being ignorant or careless about contraception, failing to heed the new sexual script or to adhere to the negotiation ethics.<sup>124</sup> In 1975, in response to wider concerns about teenage pregnancy rates, PF run a poster campaign under the slogan ‘Planning is Better than Wailing’ which depicted a young half-naked couple sitting up in bed and smiling. Hovering between them was a condom-shaped balloon with a smiling face suggesting that only by using safe contraceptives a young couple could enjoy happiness in their love life.<sup>125</sup> Sex education material repeatedly rehearsed stories of girls whose boyfriends demanded sex which they tried to refuse

---

Aufklärungsreport. Liebe zwischen 12 und 16, in: *Bravo* 1978, No 41-2; AK, Eindringer (note 68); Silies (note 6), pp. 152, 320-322, with accounts of women how they negotiated contraception and the pill with their partners during the 1960s. Cf. Amendt 2006 (note 10), p. 167.

<sup>119</sup> Lentz (note 100), p. 104.

<sup>120</sup> AK, Wer noch kein Kind haben will (note 68).

<sup>121</sup> AK: Ohne Angst miteinander schlafen, in: *Bravo* 1980, No 50.

<sup>122</sup> JS: Was Dich bewegt ...: Er sagt, Verhütungsmittel sind meine Sache, in: *Bravo* 1973, No 38.

<sup>123</sup> AK, Wolfgang’s Geburtstag (note 67); AK, Ohne Angst (note 96); AK, Verhütung geht beide Partner an (note 68).

<sup>124</sup> E.g. de Boer/Schneider/Walter (note 111), p. 27; Blick in Dein Leben. Die Pille kam zu spät, in: *Bravo* 1974, No 22; § 218. Jetzt können Mädchen selbst entscheiden, in: *Bravo* 1974, No 26; Aufklärung in Bildern. Ich pass schon auf, in: *Bravo* 1976, No 50-51, 1977, No 1; Figge et al. (note 90), pp. 22-23; AK, Liebe (note 97).

<sup>125</sup> Planen ist besser als heulen, in: *Deutsches Ärzteblatt* 72, 1975, p. 3299; also in: ‘ran 5, 1975, No 8, p. 9.

as they were scared of getting pregnant. Such narratives often included a boyfriend who claimed that he would ‘take care’ and practise the withdrawal method, or that nothing would happen the first time anyway. The girl was either portrayed as naïve or stupid if she believed the boyfriend, or as conscientious if she remained sceptical and asked for medical advice about reliable contraceptives.<sup>126</sup>

In contrast to traditional sexual morality which intended to prevent young people from exploring their sexuality, the new negotiation ethics did not judge sexual acts or practices. Hence, Dr Korff was not bothered at all about why a teenage couple had sex – whether out of love, lust, or curiosity.<sup>127</sup> The negotiation ethics only assessed *the way* a couple had agreed about their sexual activities, including contraception. Hence, what Dr Korff was concerned about was whether the couple had discussed birth control and whether they had done everything to avoid an unwanted pregnancy because ‘Just sleeping with each other and being surprised if a baby announces itself testifies to great thoughtlessness and a lack of responsibility.’<sup>128</sup>

However, the picture of teenagers’ contraceptive behaviour remained mixed. A representative survey conducted in 1980-81 suggested that 57 percent of 14-year-old girls used some form of contraception during their first intercourse (9 percent took the pill, 26 percent relied on condoms, and 26 percent used chemical methods). This figure increased to 66 percent of 15-year-old girls, 75 percent of 16-year-old, and 91 percent of 17-year-old girls (23 percent took the pill, 33 percent relied on condoms, and 21 percent used chemical methods). The proportion of girls who took no precaution during their first intercourse decreased with age from 32 percent of the 14-year-olds to 3 percent of the 17-year-olds. Amongst 14- to 15-year-old boys, 56 percent claimed to have used contraceptives during their first intercourse and this figure increased to 61 percent for the 16- to 17-year-olds. Most teenagers relied on condoms (32 percent of girls and 28 percent of boys) during the first intercourse, followed by chemical contraceptives (21 and 16 percent respectively) and the pill (18 and 11 percent respectively), but 13 percent of girls and 12 percent of boys trusted

<sup>126</sup> E.g. Berger/Richter (note 62), pp. 81-83; Neue Foto-Love-Story. Eine Aufklärung in Bildern. Liebe am Nachmittag, in: Bravo 1972, No 31-32; AK: Liebe zwischen Angst und Erfüllung. Der wahre Höhepunkt in der Liebe, in: Bravo 1974, No 31; AK, Wolfgang's Geburtstag (note 67); AK: Schwanger – was nun tun?, in: Bravo 1979, No 50; AK: Genügt es, bei der Liebe ‘aufzupassen’?, in: Bravo 1980, No 25.

<sup>127</sup> AK, Aufklärung für Fortgeschrittene (note 68).

<sup>128</sup> AK, Aufklärung für Fortgeschrittene (note 68).

to the withdrawal method, and 23 percent of girls and 33 percent of boys could not remember having used, or did not use, any contraceptives. In subsequent intercourses, the pill was the most popular contraceptive (55 percent of girls and 39 percent of boys), followed by condoms (21 and 33 percent respectively) and chemical methods (13 and 15 percent respectively). But 9 percent of girls and 12 percent of boys still relied on the withdrawal method, and 5 and 11 percent respectively did not use any contraceptives during their most recent intercourse.<sup>129</sup>

The authors of the study also noticed significant regional and educational differences in the contraceptive behaviour of teenagers, with those from larger cities and attending secondary schools more likely to use contraceptives than teenagers from rural areas and in lower school education.<sup>130</sup>

Although data from the various surveys of young people's sexual behaviour over the period of time cannot be compared as they are methodologically too different and, therefore, no clear general conclusions can be drawn about how the contraceptive behaviour of teenagers might have changed over the period of time, one can sense a trend that reliable contraceptives became more popular from 1970. This is confirmed to some extent by Gunter Schmidt who detected a similar trend between 1966 and 1981 in student communities.<sup>131</sup>

## Conclusion

From the late 1960s, West German sex education reconceptualised contraception as a technology of the self which young people were expected to learn when growing up in order to manage their sex lives. As the authors of *Boy, Girl, Man and Woman* observed, the State 'has an interest that the methods of and means for contraception are generally known'.<sup>132</sup> Compared to previous generations, teenagers of the 1970s gained much easier access to information about birth control, about which methods were safe and which unreliable, about how to obtain contraceptives, and how to apply them effectively, despite persisting challenges in accessing them. At the

<sup>129</sup> Ingolf Schmid-Tannwald, Andrejs Urdze: Sexualität und Kontrazeption aus der Sicht der Jugendlichen und ihrer Eltern. Ergebnisse einer haushaltsrepräsentativen Erhebung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland einschließlich West-Berlin, Stuttgart et al. 1983, pp. 201-211.

<sup>130</sup> Schmid-Tannwald, Urdze (note 129), p. 247.

<sup>131</sup> Gunter Schmidt: Schwangerschaft, Geburt, Abtreibung, in: Schmidt, Kinder (note 6), pp. 81-95, here p. 91.

<sup>132</sup> Brauer et al. (note 49), p. 91.

beginning of the 1980s, over 90 percent of 14- to 17-year-old teenagers claimed that they were well informed about sexual matters, including contraception.<sup>133</sup>

The new sexual script for managing contraceptive technologies promised adolescents, particularly girls, happiness and the experience of a fulfilled sex life without the fear of an unwanted pregnancy which would unlock new erotic and sexual experiences. Conversely, it also promised a happy family with the couple being able to plan the number of their children. The parameter for this new sexual script was the negotiation ethics which was formulated in the late 1960s and became dominant in sex education narratives during the 1970s.<sup>134</sup> Rather than judging sexual behaviour or practices, the negotiation ethics focused on the processes of how equal partners decided about how to manage a sexual encounter. In the 1970s, the negotiation ethics created a space for teenagers that allowed them to explore and experience their sexuality without carrying the moral burdens of previous teenage generations.

At the same time and hand in hand with better information about and access to contraceptives an expectation emerged that young people would practice birth control in all sexual relationships when conception was not intended. Teenagers were now obliged to acquire the knowledge and skills to practise contraception effectively, and to discuss and agree with their partner which contraceptive method to use. The consequence of failing to use contraceptives or making mistakes put the blame and responsibility for an unplanned pregnancy and the subsequent unhappiness entirely on the pregnant woman and her male partner. Well managed contraception, in contrast, would allow the young to enjoy their sex life. Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century the single aim and purpose of sex had been reproduction which, therefore, was forbidden for the unmarried young, the negotiation ethics turned sex into a joyful experience that was permissible to the young if they were able to manage their sex and to employ the contraceptive technology.

---

<sup>133</sup> Schmid-Tannwald, Urdze (note 129), p. 231.

<sup>134</sup> Schmidt, *Verhältnisse* (note 13); Schmidt, *Sexualverhältnisse* (note 13). Schmidt sees the negotiation ethics only emerging from the discourse on self-determination of the 1980s. However, as I have demonstrated, the concept of negotiating sex was introduced at least a decade earlier within the context of the discourse on contraception. The discourse on self-determination only reshaped the negotiation ethics and focussed it on consent in sexual encounters.