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# ‘Anarchist Amazons’: The Gendering of Radicalism in 1970s West Germany

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## Abstract

*This article examines the intersection between reactions to urban guerrilla violence and anxieties over the women’s liberation movement in 1970s West Germany. State officials and the mainstream press focused a disproportionate amount of attention on women’s contributions to left-wing violence, claiming that female guerrillas suffered from an ‘excess of women’s liberation’. However, while commentators juxtaposed domineering women with effeminate men, the actual experiences of women inside groups such as the Red Army Faction often featured expressions of male dominance. Evidence suggests that female guerrillas suffered more from a compulsion to self-sacrifice than excessive emancipation.*

Writing in 1976 in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, Jürgen Offebach was hardly alone in attributing the rise of urban guerrilla violence in 1970s West Germany to the women’s liberation movement. In an article entitled, ‘Women as Terror’s Fury’, Offebach asked, ‘What has made the female element in the terror scene so strong and shoved the men into the background?’ Although Offebach found his question ‘hard to answer’, he speculated that the ‘growing female complicity in international terror flows out of the general background of the worldwide emancipation movement’.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in addition to being labelled ‘terrorists’, female guerrillas were routinely derided

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Offebach, ‘Frauen als Furien des Terrors’, *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, 9 July 1976.

as ‘anarchist Amazons’<sup>2</sup> and ‘female supermen’.<sup>3</sup> While scholars have scrutinised the deployment of the ‘terrorist’ marker during the Federal Republic’s protracted confrontation with urban guerrilla violence, they have generally overlooked the gendered nature of anti-guerrilla rhetoric, which lay at a crossroad of anxieties over domestic terrorism and rapidly changing gender relations.<sup>4</sup> If we redirect our gaze away from the minutiae of urban guerrilla group dynamics and towards popular responses to left-wing violence, we discover that discussions of terror and counterterror functioned as a crucial site of struggle centred on gender relations and competing notions of masculinity and femininity.

The Federal Republic’s encounter with violent left-wing extremism in the 1970s was hardly unique, as German guerrillas envisioned their efforts as a local expression of a global anti-imperialist revolution. Although they were influenced and inspired by the theoretical work of Mao Zedong and the voluntaristic example of doctor-turned-revolutionary Che Guevara,<sup>5</sup> West Germany’s aspiring revolutionary cadre found a blueprint for action in the writings of a Brazilian, Carlos Marighella, who developed a strategy of guerrilla warfare for urban terrains.<sup>6</sup> As a result, German

<sup>2</sup> Dick Schubert, ‘Die Frauen waren die Seele der Gruppe’, *Christ und Welt*, 23 June 1972. The author attributes the use of this term to unnamed criminal investigators.

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Scheuch, a sociologist, as quoted in ‘Frauen im Untergrund: “Etwas Irrationales”’, *Der Spiegel*, 8 Aug. 1977. For an in-depth discussion of contemporary portrayals of female guerrillas in the West German justice system and press, see Gisela Diewald-Kerkmann, *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz: Prozesse gegen weibliche Mitglieder der RAF und der Bewegung 2. Juni* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 2009), especially 6–7, 46, 83, 138.

<sup>4</sup> One notable exception is Gisela Diewald-Kerkmann’s recent work in *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*. Belinda Davis is one of several scholars who have examined the identification of urban guerrillas as terrorists in the 1970s and its broader political and cultural implications. See Belinda Davis, ‘Activism from Starbuck to Starbucks, or Terror: What’s in a Name?’ *Radical History Review* 85, 1 (2003), 37–57. For more on incarcerated Red Army Faction members’ conscious attempts to counter the dominant discourse on terrorism through a series of co-ordinated hunger strikes, see Leith Passmore, ‘The Art of Hunger: Self-Starvation in the Red Army Faction’, *German History Review* 27, 1 (January 2009), 32–59. For a comprehensive analysis of debates surrounding urban guerrilla violence as they unfolded in the West German press, see Hanno Balz, *Von Terroristen, Sympathisanten und dem starken Staat. Die öffentliche Debatte über die RAF in den 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2008). Essays examining the relationship between terrorism and the media in the Federal Republic in the 1970s can be found in Klaus Weinbauer, Jörg Requate and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, eds., *Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik. Medien, Staat und Subkulturen in den 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2006). For a study of the Red Army Faction’s strategic use of media, see Andreas Elter, *Propaganda der Tat. Die RAF und die Medien* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> For more on the influence of Maoist ideology within the general West German New Left, see especially Gerd Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt: unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution, 1967–1977* (Cologne: Verlag Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2001); and Andreas Kühn, *Stalins Enkel, Maos Söhne: Die Lebenswelt der K-Gruppen in der Bundesrepublik der 70er Jahre* (New York and Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2005). Koenen also discusses Guevara’s privileged position in among German New Leftists in *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 84–7.

<sup>6</sup> Carlos Marighella, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, praxis-access no. 1 (Berkeley: Long Time Comin’ Press, 1969). See also Wolfgang Bertelsmeier, ‘Pour la Libération du Brésil: Kampf der Stadtguerillas’, in Redaktion Diskus, ed., *Küss den Boden der Freiheit: Texte der Neuen Linken* (Berlin and Amsterdam: Edition ID-Archiv, 1992), 259–61. For Marighella’s impact on German guerrillas see Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 71–2. For German guerrillas’ own description of their strategy, see Kollektiv RAF, ‘Das Konzept Stadtguerilla’ and

guerrillas favoured methods – such as bombings, assassinations and hostage-taking – intended to provoke the state into an aggressive counterterror response that they hoped would alienate the bulk of the populace.<sup>7</sup> This strategy enabled the Red Army Faction (RAF) and other militant left-wing groups in West Germany to generate an enormous level of fear and publicity with rather limited resources, a matter of great significance to organisations whose memberships could typically be counted in dozens rather than thousands.<sup>8</sup> Although the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA), and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) employed similar methods, these groups pursued national liberation and self-rule, objectives quite different from those of German militants. In this sense, West Germany's urban guerrilla movement more closely resembled those that emerged in the United States, Italy and Japan, where the men and women of the Weather Underground, the Red Brigades and the Japanese Red Army took up arms against the twin enemies of imperialism and capitalism.<sup>9</sup>

In the West German case, female involvement in guerrilla violence formed a central element in debates concerning an alleged 'excess of women's liberation' which were part of a broader cultural backlash against feminism.<sup>10</sup> The recent work of Gisela Diewald-Kerkmann suggests that straightforward causal links between

'Dem Volk dienen. Stadtguerilla und Klassenkampf', in *Rote Armee Fraktion. Texte und Materialien der RAF* (Berlin: ID-Verlag, 1997); and Rote Armee Fraktion, 'Das Konzept Stadtguerilla', in *Die alte Straßenverkehrsordnung* (Berlin: Tiamat, 1987), 79.

<sup>7</sup> The RAF's adoption of Marighella's strategy is discussed in detail in a 1972 state report, 'Stadtguerilla in Deutschland: Eine Dokumentation über die Theorien der Roten Armee Fraktion (Baader-Meinhof-Gruppe) zur Guerilla-Kampfführung', Bundesarchiv Koblenz (hereafter BA) B136/5051. For more on Marighella's strategy of provocation, see Marighella, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*; Ariel Merari, 'Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency', in Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, eds., *The History of Terrorism from Antiquity to Al Qaeda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 34–5; and Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, 'From 1968 to Radical Islam', in their *History of Terrorism*, 230–1.

<sup>8</sup> Gerhard Schmidtchen analysed the membership of German guerrilla groups in 'Terroristische Karrieren: Soziologische Analyse anhand von Fahndungsunterlagen und Prozeßakten' in Herbert Jäger, Gerhard Schmidtchen and Lieselotte Süllwold, eds., *Analysen zum Terrorismus: Lebenslaufanalyse*, vol. 2 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981), 23. For a discussion of Tupamaros West Berlin's exploitation of media coverage, see the autobiography of ex-member Michael 'Bommi' Baumann, *Terror or Love? Bommi Baumann's Own Story of His Life as a West German Urban Guerrilla* (New York: Grove Press, 1979), 28.

<sup>9</sup> For a typology of terrorist organisations in the 1970s, see Chaliand and Blin, 'From 1968 to Radical Islam', 227–30. For more on urban guerrilla organisations across the globe, see Walter Laqueur, ed., *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings, and Manuals* (New York: Reed Press, 2004); and Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (Portland: Frank Cass, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Günther Nollau, then president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, as quoted in Schubert, 'Die Frauen waren die Seele'. For further discussion of Nollau's thesis see Diewald-Kerkmann, *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*, 7, 138–9. Also noteworthy here is the work of Dagmar Herzog and Dorothea Hauser, who have examined anti-feminist impulses in West Germany's New Left. See Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 230–40; Dagmar Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification: Young West German Women and the Impact of the Pill', in Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, eds., *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies, 1960–1980* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 261–86; and Dorothea Hauser, *Baader und Herold. Beschreibung eines Kampfes* (Berlin: Alexander Fest Verlag, 1997), 16.

feminist politics and guerrilla violence played a less prominent role in the criminal justice system than they did in media portrayals of female terrorists.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, considering that male urban guerrillas consistently outnumbered their female counterparts, it is clear that both government officials and the mainstream press focused a disproportionate amount of their attention on women's contributions to the escalation of terrorist violence. In fact, Diewald-Kerkmann argues that criminal investigators interpreted women's participation in communal living and transgressions of established gender roles as evidence of a foreboding political radicalisation. At the same time, West German courts routinely dismissed the political agency of female militants by attributing their decisions to enter the guerrilla underground to the outside influence of (predominantly male) lovers and friends.<sup>12</sup>

Whereas commentators accepted men's involvement in left-wing violence as a political decision, they treated women's participation in the guerrilla underground as a puzzling development that demanded an additional, alternative explanation. Could the answer be found in family relations, women's biological nature, feminist teachings or the availability of the birth-control pill? Scholars and journalists alike throughout the decade bemoaned women's increased involvement in radical left-wing violence, often presenting women as the driving force behind the urban guerrilla movement.<sup>13</sup> Rather than chastising state officials and the journalistic establishment for overreacting to the urban guerrilla threat,<sup>14</sup> however, this article seeks to disentangle the intersecting discourses on radical left-wing violence and women's liberation in the 1970s by showing how female guerrillas functioned as lightning rods for the expression of broader social anxieties over rapidly changing gender relations and the (in)stability of the nuclear family.

Many West Germans experienced their country's 'red decade' (1967–77) as a period of volatility in which the privileged position of the heterosexual nuclear family was being besieged from all directions.<sup>15</sup> The Christian Democrats' 1969 surrender of political power to a left-of-centre Social-Liberal coalition under the leadership of Chancellor Willy Brandt echoed a more extensive erosion of post-war conservatism in the cultural sphere. Dagmar Herzog, in particular, has explored the ways in which

<sup>11</sup> See Diewald-Kerkmann, *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*, 138–9.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 74–5, 82–3, 92–4, 102, 138.

<sup>13</sup> For contemporary discussions of the perceived problem of women as guerrillas, see Schubert, 'Die Frauen waren die Seele'; 'Es began mit einem Kaufhausbrand', *Tagesspiegel*, 3 June 1972; 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt', *Quick*, 5 July 1972, an article that appeared as part of a *Quick* exclusive series, entitled 'Ulrike Meinhof und Ihre Grausame Mädchen'; Mark Arnold-Forster, 'Woman is "Public Enemy No. 1"', *The Guardian*, 29 May 1972; Offenbach, 'Frauen als Furien des Terrors'; 'Frauen im Untergrund'; and Margarete Mitscherich-Nielsen, 'Gewalt gegen Frauen – Gewalt von Frauen: Warum ist der Anteil der Frauen am Terrorismus so hoch?', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 Nov. 1977.

<sup>14</sup> Belinda Davis accuses Federal Republic officials of magnifying the threat of urban guerrilla violence out of all proportion and destroying liberty and democracy in the process, in Davis, 'Activism from Starbuck to Starbucks', 39.

<sup>15</sup> The concept of a 'red decade' in West Germany from 1967–77 comes from Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*; see also Franz-Werner Kersting, 'Juvenile Left-wing Radicalism, Fringe Groups, and Anti-psychiatry in West Germany', in Schildt and Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*, 353–75.

a convergence of developments in the late 1960s, including the liberalisation of sexual mores, the proliferation of nude images and the mass availability of birth-control pills worked together to undermine conservative gender norms and traditional family values.<sup>16</sup> Rates of unmarried cohabitation among West German women rose from 1 to 14 per cent in just ten years,<sup>17</sup> while the country's divorce rate climbed steadily from 1965 to 1976.<sup>18</sup> Women's increased presence in grammar schools and universities and a dramatic rise in nursery-school enrolments between 1960 and 1980 were telltale signs of the demise of the single-income family held together by a stay-at-home mother.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, the 1969 liberalisation of Paragraph 175 decriminalised homosexual acts between men over the age of twenty-one, fostering the emergence of an outspoken gay rights movement.<sup>20</sup> Taking advantage of this newly afforded political space, protestors took to the streets of the strongly Catholic city of Münster in spring 1972 for the first nationwide gay rights demonstration,<sup>21</sup> while a group of self-described 'radical lesbians' founded Germany's first Lesbian Action Centre in West Berlin that same year.<sup>22</sup>

Although West Germans were talking about sex and sexuality much more than they had done in the sexually conservative Adenauer era, this cultural transformation was not felt in the biological realm of reproduction. Commentators expressed anxiety over West Germany's plummeting birth rate, which was surpassed by its annual death rate from 1972 onwards.<sup>23</sup> The public spoke of a 'pill-induced decline', while data showed that over 80 per cent of fertile couples were using contraceptives regularly.<sup>24</sup> While declines in the national birth rate had already been recorded in the mid-1960s, by 1974 statistics showed that the Federal Republic ranked dead last in the world in fertility ratios and birth rates.<sup>25</sup> The trend had become so severe that the magazine *Der Spiegel* ran an article the following year, entitled 'The Children Don't Want Any More Children', chronicling the nation's debilitating 'baby slump'. Notwithstanding

<sup>16</sup> See Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification', 261–86. These themes are also discussed in Robert G. Moeller, 'The Elephant in the Living Room: Or Why the History of Twentieth-Century Germany Should Be a Family Affair', in Karen Hagemann and Jean H. Quataert, eds., *Gendering Modern Germany: Rewriting Historiography* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 228–49.

<sup>17</sup> Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, 'Youth, Consumption, and Politics in the Age of Radical Change', in Schildt and Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*, 20.

<sup>18</sup> Eva Kolinsky, *Women in Contemporary Germany: Life, Work, and Politics* (Providence: Berg Publishers, 1993), 52.

<sup>19</sup> Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Providence: Berg Publishers, 1988), 271–4.

<sup>20</sup> Herzog, *Sex After Fascism*, 148–52, 220–34.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>22</sup> Monika Kühn, 'The Lesbian Action Centre, West Berlin: The Formation of Group Solidarity', in Edith Hoshino Altbach, Jeanette Clausen, Dagmar Schultz, and Naomi Stephan, eds., *German Feminism: Readings in Politics and Literature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 311–14.

<sup>23</sup> See Frevert, *Women in German History*, 81.

<sup>24</sup> 'Die Kinder wollen keine Kinder mehr', *Der Spiegel*, 24 March 1975, cover page ('Sterben die Deutschen aus?'), 41, 44.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 39, 42. Fertility ratios were measured in live births per 1,000 women between 15 and 45 years of age, while birth rates were measured in live births per 1,000 residents.

the 'fertile results' of West Germany's foreign *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers), whose birth rates amounted to a veritable 'baby boom', the article's authors speculated that there might be 'no Germans left in 300 years'. The piece also quoted Christian Democrat and former family minister Franz-Josef Wuemerling, who described Germans as 'a dying nation'.<sup>26</sup>

The development of the 'new' women's movement during this tumultuous period exacerbated widespread fears that the nuclear family was in a state of crisis, particularly since feminists insisted on approaching heterosexual sex as a political matter.<sup>27</sup> Considering the crucial part played by family policy and biological reproduction in the modern state's ongoing dialogue with individual self-determination, Kristina Schulz has argued that the German abortion reform campaign should be understood as a challenge to the greater sexual order.<sup>28</sup> The campaign was well under way by spring 1971,<sup>29</sup> and when delegates from forty local groups gathered in Frankfurt the following year for the first national women's conference, they chose the repeal of anti-abortion legislation as their preferred rallying cry.<sup>30</sup> The year 1972 also witnessed the establishment of West Germany's first women's centres<sup>31</sup> and the nation's first women's magazine, *Hexenpresse* (Witches' Press).<sup>32</sup> Although the formation of this 'female-centred public countersphere' empowered German women, many West German men felt threatened by a new generation of feminists who confronted patriarchy's inner core by openly rejecting housework and the traditional gendered divisions of labour in the domestic and public spheres.<sup>33</sup> The anti-feminist reactions to urban guerrilla activity in the 1970s described below were thus conditioned by broader social developments that seemed to undermine the sanctity of the patriarchal and heterosexual nuclear family.

While contemporaries tended to accept the notion that women's involvement in left-wing violence stemmed from an 'excess of women's liberation', in many respects it constituted a break from feminism. For not only did the women of the guerrilla underground forego the radical subjectivity of the women's liberation movement to enter into inter-gender partnerships with men, but male and female guerrillas alike also consistently stressed the importance of the collective over the worth of

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 41. See also Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification', 273–4, 279–80.

<sup>27</sup> For the importance of the abortion rights campaign in the crystallisation of the new women's movement and the politicisation of sex in West Germany, see Kristina Schulz, 'Echoes of Provocation: 1968 and the Women's Movements in France and Germany', in Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 137–54; Frevert, *Women in German History*, 291–5; Herzog, *Sex After Fascism*, 220–25; and Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification', 260, 275–7.

<sup>28</sup> Schulz, 'Echoes of Provocation', 138.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>30</sup> Frevert, *Women in German History*, 294–8. See also Andrei S. Markovits and Philip S. Gorski, *The German Left: Red, Green and Beyond* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 89.

<sup>31</sup> Edith Hoshino Altbach, 'The New German Women's Movement', in Hoshino Altbach et al., *German Feminism*, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Markovits and Gorski, *The German Left*, 89.

<sup>33</sup> The concept of a 'female-centred public countersphere' comes from Herzog, *Sex After Fascism*, 226. For men's reactions to feminism, see Frevert, *Women in German History*, 291–3; and Kolinsky, *Women in Contemporary Germany*, 66–7.

the individual.<sup>34</sup> My findings suggest that the concept of an 'excess of self-sacrifice' describes the mental universe of German guerrillas far more accurately than the rhetoric of excessive liberation, prompting new questions about reactions to left-wing violence in the 1970s. Why did official and public responses to guerrilla attacks so often focus on the participation of women? Why did West German commentators draw explicit connections between guerrilla violence and the women's liberation movement? What do misleading portrayals of inverted gender hierarchies and overly emancipated guerrilla women tell us about West German society as a whole?

## I

Contrary to the media coverage, a 1981 study commissioned by the West German federal ministry of the interior found that men greatly outnumbered women in the urban guerrilla underground. Only one-third of the 227 left-wing radicals for whom a warrant of arrest had been issued up to the end of 1978 on the grounds of participation in a terrorist association were women.<sup>35</sup> The constant hyperbole concerning female guerrilla violence conveniently obscured the fact that the majority of offenders were male, thus justifying the scrutiny of guerrilla women as a distinct gendered category. Nevertheless, the public's obsession with female guerrillas was quite understandable on a number of levels. Compared with women's participation in right-wing political violence, the number of female urban guerrillas was strikingly high, as West Germany's radical right-wing organisations remained bastions of male exclusivity.<sup>36</sup> As part of the same government-sponsored academic investigation, clinical psychologist Lieselotte Süllwold concluded that women were at least as likely as men, if not more likely, to assume positions of leadership in the hierarchies of the left-wing terror scene, providing women 'an opportunity for contribution that contradicted traditional relationship roles'.<sup>37</sup> And even if women in the guerrilla underground did not outnumber their male counterparts, female contributions to left-wing violence greatly outpaced their involvement in general criminal activity, which hovered at 15 per cent.<sup>38</sup>

Concerns over female guerrilla violence first seized the limelight following the Red Army Faction's dramatic bomb offensive in May 1972, when the group managed

<sup>34</sup> For examples of RAF members' thoughts on the guerrilla collective, see Gudrun Ensslin as quoted in Uta Demes, *Die Binnenstruktur der RAF: Divergenz zwischen postulierter und tatsächlicher Gruppenrealität* (New York and Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 1994), 45; and Werner Lotze, as quoted in Demes, *Die Binnenstruktur der RAF*, 44.

<sup>35</sup> Schmidtchen, 'Terroristische Karrieren', 23. The study analysed the demographic data of 250 male and female (227 left-wing and 23 right-wing) radicals who 'to the end of the year 1978 who had been sought, indicted, or condemned due to a violation of Paragraph 129a of the criminal code, or who would have been condemned had 129a already gone into effect by that point in time'.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. None of the militant groups of the radical right could claim a single female member.

<sup>37</sup> Lieselotte Süllwold, 'Stationen in der Entwicklung von Terroristen: Psychologische Aspekte biographischer Daten', *Analysen zum Terrorismus*, vol. 2, 106.

<sup>38</sup> Tobias Wunschik, *Baader-Meinhofs Kinder. Der zweite Generation der RAF* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), 83.

to target six different West German cities – Frankfurt, Augsburg, Munich, Karlsruhe, Hamburg and Heidelberg – over a two-week period. Of course, women had been intimately involved in the Red Army Faction from its inception two years previously, when a single unidentified man and four women – RAF core members Gudrun Ensslin and Ulrike Meinhof, as well as Ingrid Schubert and 18-year-old Irene Goergens – liberated convicted arsonist Andreas Baader from police custody during a deadly shootout at a West Berlin library. But it was the unprecedented wave of terror in spring 1972, including the bombing of the Springer Press headquarters, which caused high-ranking state officials and prominent scholars to draw explicit links between guerrilla violence and women's liberation. As early as June 1972, less than two months into his term as president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Günther Nollau publicly expressed concern over an 'excess of women's liberation'.<sup>39</sup> Although Nollau made these remarks with reference to women's active roles in the RAF's recent bombing campaign, he was undoubtedly also reacting to a whirlwind of non-violent political mobilisation that was challenging established norms of femininity and sexuality.

West Germany's social conservatives attempted to capitalise on the pervasive revulsion felt towards the RAF's lethal bomb attacks by conflating the urban guerrilla movement with the women's liberation project. The newspaper *Christ und Welt* wasted little time in amassing testimony from leading academic figures to sustain this tendentious viewpoint. In an article entitled 'The Women Were the Soul of the Group', Dick Schubert presented opinions from (male) experts in the fields of sociology, criminology, psychology and psychiatry to support his attempts to trace the origins of the recent guerrilla violence back to the 'beginning of the student protest movement' and the formation of 'broads' committees (*Weiberräte*) by female members of the left-of-centre extra-parliamentary opposition (APO) in the late 1960s.<sup>40</sup> Friedrich Geerds, a professor of criminology, also drew explicit links to the protest movement, noting a general revolt against 'traditional gender roles', since 'the APO ladies do not accept the old model anymore, in which the woman is soft, and at best cunning, in contrast to the reckless man'.<sup>41</sup> A Frankfurt forensic doctor and psychiatrist, Reinhard Redhardt, who had previously examined RAF member Gudrun Ensslin for the court, saw female urban guerrillas as 'extremely emancipated women, who have set themselves against men', rather than old-fashioned 'gangster

<sup>39</sup> Nollau, as quoted in Schubert, 'Die Frauen waren die Seele der Gruppe'.

<sup>40</sup> The term 'APO' refers to the 'extra-parliamentary opposition' movement of the late 1960s, with which the mainstream media often associated urban guerrillas. For more information on the formation of *Weiberräte*, or 'broads' committees, in the Federal Republic, and feminists' conflicts with the APO leadership, see Schulz, 'Echoes of Provocation'; Markovits and Gorski, *The German Left*, 86–94; and Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 233–43. For a recent study of political protest in the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic see Timothy S. Brown, "'1968" East and West: Divided Germany as a Case Study in Transnational History', *American History Review* 114, 1 (2009), 69–96.

<sup>41</sup> Schubert, 'Die Frauen waren die Seele der Gruppe'. Götz Aly has stressed the connections between 1968 and the terror of the 1970s by including the RAF's Ulrike Meinhof on a shortlist of the 1968ers' cult of personality, along with APO leader Rudi Dutschke, Che Guevara, Ho Chi Minh and Mao Zedong. See Götz Aly, *Unser Kampf. 1968* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2008), 7–8.



sweethearts'. A sociologist, Erwin Scheuch, added that the transformation of the women of the RAF into 'female men' was enhanced by the fact that the men of the group were 'downright softies', placing the group's political violence in the broader social context of anxiety over shifting gender relations.<sup>42</sup> Expert testimony thus served to affirm Günther Nollau's gendered understanding of 'liberation' as a potential threat to the (male) democratic order.

This diagnosis of excessive emancipation was actually part of an international paradigm shift in conceptions of female criminality. Although journalists identified the 'woman as gang leader' as a novel development,<sup>43</sup> those who made such claims looked beyond the borders of the Federal Republic, discovering versions of Gudrun Ensslin and Ulrike Meinhof overseas in Fusako Shigenobu of the Japanese Red Army, Bernadine Dohrn of the Weather Underground or Leila Khaled of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.<sup>44</sup> These widely publicised cases of female guerrilla violence paralleled a general increase in female criminal activity throughout the world, prompting the United Nations to organise a symposium on 'women's delinquency' in 1972 in Geneva.<sup>45</sup> Women's contributions to guerrilla violence garnered considerable attention in an unofficial 1972 publication known as the *Baader-Meinhof Report*, produced from authentic but illegally obtained federal files.<sup>46</sup> The report's anonymous authors, whom federal investigators labelled as right-wing radicals,<sup>47</sup> lamented an emerging pattern of 'female gang leaders', something they described as a 'totally new phenomenon in the criminal history of the world'. The illicit publication also attributed the rise in female crime rates to recent developments in contraception, arguing that the birth-control pill enabled women to 'seek new and dangerous thrills, without any fear of unwanted pregnancy'. In the end, however, the *Baader-Meinhof Report* was forced to dismiss this line of reasoning in the case of RAF core members Ensslin and Meinhof, noting that the women had already mothered children before they took up armed resistance.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Geerds, Redhart and Scheuch were all quoted in Schubert, 'Die Frauen waren die Seele der Gruppe'.

<sup>43</sup> 'Gudrun Ensslin: die eiskalte Verführerin', *Bild-am-Sonntag*, 11 June 1972. *Bild* claimed that the concept of 'woman as gang leader' was 'relatively new for the criminal police'. For other examples see 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt'; and Offenbach, 'Frauen als Furien des Terrors'.

<sup>44</sup> See 'Ausbruch in Berlin: die Terroristen machen mobil', *Der Spiegel*, 12 July 1976; 'Frauen im Untergrund'; and *Der Baader-Meinhof Report: Dokumente, Analysen, Zusammenhänge* (Mainz: Hase & Koehler, 1972), 14. While the two *Spiegel* articles list Shigenobu and Khaled as comparable examples, the *Baader-Meinhof Report* mentions Dohrn and Hiroko Nagata.

<sup>45</sup> The United Nations symposium became a topic of discussion several years later, when *Der Spiegel* revisited Günther Nollau's claims of an 'excess of women's liberation'. See 'Frauen im Untergrund', 23.

<sup>46</sup> For press coverage on this controversy see 'Gefälschter "Baader-Meinhof-Report"', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 4 Aug. 1972; 'Bundeskriminalamt: Wiege des Bösen', *Der Spiegel*, 7 Aug. 1972, 34; 'Untersuchung angeordnet: Der Baader-Meinhof Report', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8 Aug. 1972; 'Mainzer Staatsanwaltschaft befasst sich mit "Baader-Meinhof Report"', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 Aug. 1972; and 'Strafverfahren gegen Verantwortliche für den "Baader-Meinhof Report": Wegen unzulässiger Veröffentlichungen – Strafantrag von 16 Anwälten', *Tagesspiel*, 10 Aug. 1972. For a more recent discussion of the matter, see Elter, *Propaganda der Tat*, 86–7.

<sup>47</sup> 'Wiege des Bösen', 34.

<sup>48</sup> *Baader-Meinhof Report*, 14.

In the early years of guerrilla activity in West Germany, women had been viewed as passive victims in a game of criminal seduction, or as ornamental accessories, rather than as pacesetters or commanding officers. The liberal and conservative press hesitated to ascribe any political agency to female guerrillas, typically brushing them aside as mere 'revolution chicks' or 'gangster girls' who had been seduced into activism by more seasoned male partners.<sup>49</sup> *Quick* magazine, for example, described West Berlin as a place where 'young men who could talk an inexperienced girl into a stupor all night long with Chinese ideology' mesmerised naive young women from the countryside.<sup>50</sup> This early tendency of West Germans to dismiss female guerrillas as 'slim-hipped auxiliary cadres' figured prominently in the tactics of left-wing militant groups.<sup>51</sup>

In their initial phases, both the Red Army Faction and the Tupamaros West Berlin relied on young women to breach building security, since they were seldom regarded as potential bomb planters. Although the RAF has garnered far more media and scholarly attention over the years, West Germany's first urban guerrilla troupe crystallised in West Berlin around the figure of Dieter Kunzelmann, the charismatic leader of the former Kommune I.<sup>52</sup> Shortly before Christmas 1969, Kunzelmann's twenty-year-old girlfriend Annekatri Bruhn planted bombs wrapped in Christmas paper in El-Al airline's West Berlin office (on the same night as a Tupamaros arson attack against the Amerikahaus in Berlin) and the enormous KaDeWe department store, as well as another in the Radio Tower Palace in January 1970, which detonated as planned during the annual jurists' ball.<sup>53</sup> Even though she confessed to the bombings, a paternalistic court was quick to identify the drug-dependent Bruhn as a helpless victim of male bullying, handing her a much lighter sentence than that for the thirty-year-old Kunzelmann, whom Annekatri had described as a man no one dared to contradict.<sup>54</sup> The assumption at work here was that the older male figure was the mastermind behind the plot, with the young woman serving as a vulnerable accomplice.

The fact that male security guards tended to overlook women as potential security risks worked to the Red Army Faction's advantage during its 1972 bomb offensive. The chameleon-like adaptability of the RAF's Irmgard Möller enabled her effortlessly

<sup>49</sup> For examples, see Günter Werz, 'Die rote Blüten im Berliner Dschungel', *Südwest Presse*, 16 Feb. 1971; and Bruno Manz, 'Warum Hella das Kammergericht in Brand steckte', *Münchener Merkur*, 31 Jan. 1972. Werz used the term 'Bandenmädchen' (gangster girls), while Manz described arsonist Hella Maher as a 'Revoluzzer-Braut' (revolution chick). See also Diewald-Kerkmann's discussion of Horst Mahler's 'harem' in *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*, 83.

<sup>50</sup> 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt', 74.

<sup>51</sup> Jürgen Offenbach of the *Stuttgarter Nachrichten* coined this phrase in a 1976 article, in an effort to describe prior conceptions of women's involvement in left-wing violence. See Offenbach, 'Frauen als Furien des Terrors'.

<sup>52</sup> For more on Kunzelmann and the Tupamaros West Berlin, see especially Wolfgang Kraushaar, *Die Bombe im Jüdischen Gemeindehaus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition HIS, 2005); and Kunzelmann, *Leisten Sie keinen Widerstand! Bilder aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Transit, 1999).

<sup>53</sup> Kraushaar, *Die Bombe*, 152–3, 182–8. Bruhn's case is also discussed in Manz, 'Warum Hella das Kammergericht in Brand steckte'.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 82–203, 215. While Annekatri Bruhn received a two-year prison sentence, Dieter Kunzelmann was originally sentenced to nine years in prison, a conviction that would eventually be overturned on a technicality.

to penetrate the US Fifth Infantry Headquarters in Frankfurt, where she likely planted the bombs that injured thirteen and killed Lieutenant Paul Bloomquist, a Vietnam veteran and the 1964 'army aviator of the year'. The police report chronicling Möller's subsequent arrest in July portrayed the young guerrilla as an uncouth menace who bit and scratched one arresting officer before urinating on another.<sup>55</sup> In stark contrast, clad as an affluent socialite during her visit to the officer's club of the US base in Frankfurt, Möller charmed her way past an unsuspecting member of the military police without undergoing the standard security check. In a subsequent police line-up, twenty-one-year-old Larry Young identified Möller as the 'beautiful girl' whom he allowed to use the second-floor ladies' room on the day of the deadly attack. Unfortunately, Young had not suspected that the young woman with a 'really sexy figure', who gave off the 'impression that she came from a 'good' family', was also a RAF bomb planter.<sup>56</sup> Two weeks – and six bomb attacks, four deaths and seventy-seven injuries – later, the period in which urban guerrillas could exploit popular perceptions of women as unlikely participants in political violence was a distant memory.

Public discussions of urban guerrilla activity that followed the bomb campaign provided a potent site for struggles over competing versions of masculinity and femininity, with opponents of women's liberation projecting their anxieties over a decline in male authority on to the country's left-wing radicals. The West German press now depicted the women of the RAF and other guerrilla groups as vindictive and domineering, to the frustration of female guerrillas.<sup>57</sup> Following the RAF's 1972 bomb campaign, an article in *Quick* magazine concluded that 'many of the terrorist women try to compensate for their female complexes through acts of violence',<sup>58</sup> since their vision of emancipation compels them to 'imitate tough men'.<sup>59</sup> Commentators often reached back into Greek mythology in search of recognizable tropes that would underscore the danger posed to the patriarchal order by female guerrillas'. *Christ und Welt's* deployment of the term 'anarchist Amazons' made reference to a legendary nation of female warriors whose members enslaved men and discarded male infants.<sup>60</sup> In a similar fashion, the liberal *Zeit* conjured up images of Lysistrata – the figure in ancient Greek literature who encouraged women to withhold sex from their husbands – as part of its attempt to link the nation's declining birth rate

<sup>55</sup> Möller was arrested together with her accomplice Klaus Jünschke on 7 July 1972 in Offenbach, as part of a national manhunt that followed the RAF's May 1972 bomb offensive. See Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (hereafter HIS): RAF-Sammlung 1. Generation, Ju, K/002, 001.

<sup>56</sup> Young's testimony can be found in Bundeskriminalamt, 'Vernehmung Larry Young, 1. Okt. 1973'; Landeskriminalamt – Baden-Württemberg, '2. Nov. 1973, Vernehmung Larry Young'; 'Der Ermittlungsrichter des Bundesgerichtshof, 2. Nov. 1973, Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Baader u.a., hier: Irmgard Möller'; and Amtsgericht Zweibrücken, 'Zeugung Vernehmung Larry Young gegen Junschke, 11. Jan. 1974', in BA B362/3096. For earlier interrogations of Young, see 'Zeugnisausgabe von Larry David Young, 23. Mai 1973', and Bundeskriminalamt, 'Vernehmung von Larry Young, 13. July 1973', in BA B362/3095.

<sup>57</sup> See Margrit Schiller, *Es war ein harter Kampf um meine Erinnerung. Ein Lebensbericht aus der RAF* (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag, 1999), 45–6.

<sup>58</sup> 'Ulrike Meinhof und Ihre Grausamen Mädchen', *Quick*, 28 June 1972.

<sup>59</sup> 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt'.

<sup>60</sup> For use of the term 'anarchist Amazons', see Schubert, 'Die Frauen war die Seele'.

to women's emancipation.<sup>61</sup> When chronicling Germany's urban guerrilla activity, journalists took the added step of juxtaposing images of dominant women with those of effeminate, cowardly and subservient guerrilla men. Quite simply, it was difficult for many commentators to imagine the existence of empowered, politically active females, unless that position was achieved at the direct expense of the group's male membership.

Contemporary portrayals of Andreas Baader bear scant resemblance to the person who would be posthumously reinvented as a symbol of rugged masculinity.<sup>62</sup> Baader, who, like many Germans born during the Second World War, had been raised in a fatherless home, received the nickname 'baby' from his comrades in the RAF underground.<sup>63</sup> The claim by an RAF dropout, Peter Homann, that Fatah members had mocked Baader as a 'coward' during a 1970 excursion by RAF members to a guerrilla training camp in Jordan repeatedly found its way into the mainstream press.<sup>64</sup> One publication even claimed that Baader had been 'sadly underequipped' by nature.<sup>65</sup> A 1972 *Bild-Zeitung* article, entitled 'The Story of a Young Man Who Always Did Everything Wrong: Andreas Baader – Botched for Eternity', provided excerpts from an interview with one of Baader's ex-girlfriends that underscored the prevalent narrative of gender role reversal: "He was terribly vain", said a girl who had slept with him. "He always turned off the light because he thought he was too fat".<sup>66</sup> Five years later, *Stern* magazine ran an almost identical story of gender reversal featuring Zohair Yousif Akache, the leader of the Palestinian commando that hijacked a Lufthansa jet in a futile attempt to liberate Baader and his fellow RAF core members from federal prison. In that piece, entitled 'Captain Mahmud Was My Lover', twenty-year-old Branka Ninkovic informed *Stern* readers that her ex-boyfriend Akache was 'very vain', bathing twice a day and changing his bed sheets every other day. However – so Ninkovic said – the commando leader hated tight pants, since 'he didn't want to look like one of the English homos' who lived in his neighbourhood.<sup>67</sup>

Stories of gender role reversal among urban guerrillas implied that their compulsion towards violence originated in their deviant sexuality. This was a recurring theme in the *Baader-Meinhof Report*, whose anonymous authors went so

<sup>61</sup> See Viola Roggenkamp, 'Lysistrata geht um: Kein Pillenknick, sondern die Emanzipation der Frau lehrt die Gesellschaft das Fürchten', *Die Zeit*, 22 April 1977, 77, as quoted in Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification', 279. Roggenkamp's piece appeared two weeks after the RAF's April 7 assassination of Siegfried Buback.

<sup>62</sup> For examples of Andreas Baader in feature films, see Christopher Roth, dir., *Baader*, 2002; and Uli Edel, dir., *Der Baader-Meinhof Komplex*, 2008.

<sup>63</sup> For an in-depth examination of Baader's upbringing and sexuality, see Karin Wieland, 'a', in Wolfgang Kraushaar, ed., *Rudi Dutschke, Andreas Baader und die RAF* (Hamburg: HIS Verlag, 2005).

<sup>64</sup> See 'Als die Baader-Meinhof Bande in Jordanien lebte: Zärtliche Nächte in Beduinenzelt', *Bild*, 12 June 1972; and 'Frauen im Untergrund'; Homann's story of Baader being defamed as a 'coward' also appeared in *Baader-Meinhof Report*, 45.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>66</sup> 'Die Geschichte eines jungen Mannes, der immer alles falsch gemacht hat: Andreas Baader – Verpfuscht in alle Ewigkeit', *Bild-Zeitung*, 5 June 1972.

<sup>67</sup> 'Captain Mahmud war mein Geliebter', *Stern*, 15 Dec. 1977.

far as to declare that the 'majority of the female members of the political terror groups' were either 'lesbians or bisexually inclined', a claim also asserted by *Bild-am-Sonntag*.<sup>68</sup> Importantly, while the media magnified tales of gender inversion and signs of homosexual tendencies among group members, urban guerrillas' numerous heterosexual partnerships received scant attention.<sup>69</sup> One notable exception to this trend was the well-documented romance between RAF core members Gudrun Ensslin and Andreas Baader. However, considering that Ensslin and Baader had both produced children out of wedlock before entering the guerrilla underground, their relationship was hardly viewed as wholesome and traditional. Indeed, Gudrun Ensslin, a preacher's daughter who had previously appeared in an erotic film, was a favourite object of attack. The tabloid press presented her as a uniquely talented bisexual temptress who seduced married men and women in order to gain shelter for the night.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, law enforcement officials viewed the longhaired men of the RAF askance, ridiculing them as 'feminine' and 'girlish', stereotypes that filtered through to the mainstream media.<sup>71</sup> The anonymous authors of the 1972 *Baader-Meinhof Report* claimed that the Palestinian guerrillas who had hosted and trained RAF members in 1970 would have identified the 'feminine, milk-bearded Baader' as gay, since homosexuality had been an accepted part of Arab culture for 'thousands of years'.<sup>72</sup>

The arrest of Gerhard Müller provides the clearest example of how law enforcement officials and journalists could work together to emasculate male guerrillas while presenting RAF women as a threat to the sexual order. When the trained electrician was apprehended together with Ulrike Meinhof in Hannover shortly after the RAF's 1972 bomb campaign, the arresting officers described him to the media as 'a delicate young man of run-down elegance'.<sup>73</sup> The Springer-owned tabloid *Bild-am-Sonntag* ran an article entitled 'Body Servant to the Female Terrorist', taking its readers on a voyeuristic journey into the deviant guerrilla underground:

Ulrike Meinhof, thirteen years his elder, was his breadwinner and *Führerin*, friend and mother. Sometimes also his lover, although that was actually counter to his nature. He was a true body servant, a 'Bursche' [lad], as the imperial officers once had around them . . . previously convicted due to a violation of Paragraph 175, and therefore marked as a 'rent boy' in police jargon.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Baader-Meinhof Report*, 17; and 'Gudrun Ensslin: die eiskalte Verführerin'. See also Schiller, *Es war ein harter Kampf*, 45.

<sup>69</sup> In addition to a large number of long-term heterosexual relationships outside the institution of marriage, married guerrilla couples included Barbara and Ronald Augustin, Waltraud and Peter-Jürgen Boock, Gabriele Kröcher-Tiedemann and Norbert Kröcher, and Angelika and Volker Speitel.

<sup>70</sup> For an example of tabloid treatments of Gudrun Ensslin's erotic film experience, see 'Bevor sie zu Baader-Meinhof stieß spielte Gudrun Ensslin in einem Sex-Film mit: Welche Rolle spielte Pfarrers Tochter Ensslin', *Bild-Zeitung*, 23 Jan. 1972; for discussions of Ensslin's lesbian inclinations, see 'Baader-Meinhof und das allgemeine Misstrauen', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 Jan. 1972.

<sup>71</sup> See Bundeskriminalamt – Sonderkommission Baader-Meinhof, 'Lagebericht: Stand 31 Aug. 1972', 19 Se 1972, BA B106/83805.

<sup>72</sup> *Baader-Meinhof Report*, 43.

<sup>73</sup> 'So würde Ulrike Meinhof in Hannover gefasst', *Welt-am-Sonntag*, 18 June 1972.

<sup>74</sup> "'Leibdiener der Terroristin" So stieß Gerhard Müller zur Bande', *Bild-am-Sonntag*, 18 June 1972.

Part of the German legal code since the days of Bismarck but intensified under Nazi rule, the controversial Paragraph 175 criminalised male homosexuality. By explicitly linking Müller to this statute, the editors of *Bild-am-Sonntag* sought to remove all ambiguities concerning the perpetrator's preferred sexual orientation. In a continuation of the ongoing discussion of gender inversion that accompanied guerrilla violence, Meinhof and Müller are presented here as part-time lovers, with the older woman assuming the traditional male role. The guerrillas' violent assault on the public political sphere could thus be read as an extension of their perversion of the private sexual sphere.

Another journalistic trend that emerged in both the conservative and liberal press was the repeated construction of a narrative of the 'fallen woman', in which feminist politics and guerrilla warfare were speciously intertwined. Whether reporting on Ulrike Meinhof, 'preacher's daughter' Gudrun Ensslin,<sup>75</sup> 'pharmacist's daughter' Ingrid Siepmann,<sup>76</sup> or 'millionaire's daughter' Angela Luther,<sup>77</sup> the central elements of the narrative were the same: a promising young woman from a proper bourgeois home gradually descends into the wanton world of the guerrilla underground, with stops along the way including participation in 'broads' committees (*Weiberräte*) or anti-authoritarian childcare centres (*Kinderläden*), a failed marriage, separation from a child and perhaps even a brief experiment in communal living in Berlin.<sup>78</sup> *Quick* magazine seized the initiative, running a series following the RAF's 1972 bomb campaign entitled, 'Ulrike Meinhof and Her Gruesome Girls', in which it presented no fewer than ten separate vignettes of the fallen women of the urban guerrilla underground. The female outlaws were introduced according to their fathers' professions – architect, factory manager, university lecturer, military officer, and multi-millionaire farmer – in an effort to stress their bourgeois upbringings, even though this particular journalistic approach was never taken with male guerrillas.<sup>79</sup> While *Quick* detailed the transformation of upstanding adolescents into 'gruesome girls . . . of an international gangster organization',<sup>80</sup> the magazine also portrayed them as 'pitiful victim[s] of women like Ulrike Meinhof and men like Andreas Baader'.<sup>81</sup>

Ulrike Meinhof provided the quintessential foil for the media's 'fallen woman' narratives, not only because she was the RAF's leading ideologue, but also because,

<sup>75</sup> 'Bevor sie zu Baader-Meinhof stieß'; and 'Die Pfarrerstochter aus Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt', *Express*, 2 June 1972.

<sup>76</sup> 'Was die Entführer schrieben', *Bild*, 1 March 1975. Siepmann's case is also discussed in detail in 'Vater der Terroristin: Schlimm, dass man Ingrid noch hilft', *Bild*, 3 March 1973; and 'Das ruinierte Leben der Ingrid Siepmann', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 Nov. 1977.

<sup>77</sup> 'Angela Luther: Die Terroristin aus Elbenchausee', *Bild*, 1 March 1975.

<sup>78</sup> Examples of guerrilla 'fallen woman' narratives are numerous, and include 'Das war einmal Ulrike Meinhof', *Bild*, 5 June 1972; 'Ulrike Meinhof und Ihre Grausamen Mädchen'; 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt'; 'Ulrike Meinhof: Sie ist voller Haß – aber sie isst brau ihren Brei', *Bild HH*, 25 Nov. 1972; 'Vater der Terroristin'; 'Angela Luther: Die Terroristin aus der Elbchausee'; 'Das Protokoll der Entscheidung': Die Entführung', *Stern*, 6 March 1975; and 'Brigitte Mohnhaupt: die neue Chefin des Terrors', *Quick*, 8–14 Dec. 1977.

<sup>79</sup> 'Ulrike Meinhof und Ihre Grausamen Mädchen'; and 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt'.

<sup>80</sup> 'Ulrike Meinhof und Ihre Grausamen Mädchen', 18.

<sup>81</sup> 'Die Saat der nackten Gewalt', 76.

as the former editor-in-chief of a prominent leftist magazine, she possessed the most distinguished résumé of anyone on the urban guerrilla scene. A *Bild-Zeitung* biographical piece on Meinhof, published between the May 1972 bomb attacks and Meinhof's arrest a month later, featured a picture of the former journalist at home nurturing her young children. It was accompanied by the following caption:

This photo shows the woman that Ulrike Meinhof once was: it was taken in 1963, at her home in Hamburg. Her twin daughters, Bettina and Regina, born in 1962, are sitting on her lap. She left these children in order to pursue political delusions that led her single-mindedly into the underground and terrorism. Every criminal has a phase in his life, in which he is not unlawful. This photo shows Meinhof in such a phase.<sup>82</sup>

The straightforward link between a woman's abandonment of her maternal duties and her subsequent involvement in terrorism expressed in this narrative of the 'fallen woman' was probably not surprising to *Bild-Zeitung's* conservative readership base. The failure of women to fulfil their reproductive childrearing responsibilities was easily stigmatised as the first step down a hazardous path that could potentially culminate in misguided acts of terrorist violence. In stark contrast, male guerrillas' abandonment of their paternal responsibilities seldom caught the media's interest.<sup>83</sup>

While female participation in guerrilla violence attracted attention and consternation throughout the decade, the Federal Republic's perpetual war on terror was also expressed in gendered terms. The Federal Agency for Civic Education published literature on guerrilla violence peppered with phrases such as 'phallic women' and 'the terror of lesbian women'.<sup>84</sup> Certainly not limited to isolated remarks from state officials, however, sexist rhetoric played a central role in contemporary media coverage of the urban guerrilla movement, as left-wing violence was often presented as an outcome of the transgression of traditional gender roles. Following the RAF's May 1972 offensive, the radical right *National Zeitung* expressed outrage that 'the police were, so to speak, "castrated", their effectiveness paralysed by a concerted action of the united Left'.<sup>85</sup> This explicit expression of anxiety over the potential emasculation of the West German state had also been voiced, albeit a bit more subtly, by the federal chancellor himself during a nationally televised address to the West German public in February, entitled 'Protection of Democracy from Political Violence'. In response to debates over the government's handling of left-wing violence, Willy Brandt warned West German citizens that, 'the free democracy that we have built up from the rubble of war and dictatorship must not be misunderstood as a wimp-state'.<sup>86</sup> The chancellor's comments foreshadowed the formulation of the

<sup>82</sup> 'Das war einmal Ulrike Meinhof.'

<sup>83</sup> The most glaring example involves Andreas Baader. For more on the circumstances surrounding the birth of Baader's daughter, see Hauser, *Baader und Herold*, 117. Baader moved to West Berlin in 1963, becoming romantically involved with the wife of a married couple whose residence he shared. He fathered a daughter, Suse, with her in 1965, but became involved with Gudrun Ensslin and quickly lost contact with her.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>85</sup> 'Wer wird der nächste Opfer des roten Bombenterrors?' *National-Zeitung*, 2 June 1972.

<sup>86</sup> 'Appel des Bundeskanzlers', 4 Feb. 1972, contained in the 'Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung-Bulletin' on 8 Feb. 1972. Brandt's speech was also broadcast live on national

concept of ‘militant democracy’ used to justify more aggressive counterterror methods in the second half of the decade.<sup>87</sup>

In order to combat right-wing attacks that equated social-liberal reform with the weakening of the West German state, progressives also resorted to the aggressive hyper-masculinised rhetoric commonly associated with the Right. *Die Zeit*’s leading political commentator, Theo Sommer, for example, in an article entitled, ‘Not a State of Wimps’, rejected the idea of ‘guilt-by-association’ rhetoric in which ‘anyone who supported the reform-hungry students in 1967/68 is described as a spiritual father of the 1972 bomb planters’. For Sommer, the Federal Republic was ‘neither a Gestapo state, as the pathological left attempts to make itself believe, nor a state of wimps that aspires to convince the public’. In an attempt to preserve the integrity of reformist politics, Sommer stressed that the ‘backslide into guerrilla romanticism that the freaked-out desperados of the [Baader-Meinhof] clique allow themselves is not typical for the left, neither for the independent New Left nor for the DKP [German Communist Party] and their tightly bound student circle’.<sup>88</sup>

## II

The shift in the tactics of German guerrillas in the second half of the decade sparked outrage among liberals and leftists alike, while lending further credence to the claim that female militants suffered from excessive emancipation. Although hunger strikes and the deaths of RAF inmates generated extensive expressions of public sympathy,<sup>89</sup> the guerrillas’ migration towards assassinations and hostage-takings signalled an escalation in brutality, particularly when the so-called second generation of RAF militants began to kidnap prominent figures from the private sector in order to force a prisoner exchange.<sup>90</sup> While the Nazi background of the industrialist Hanns-Martin Schleyer and his position as ‘double president’ of two of the Federal Republic’s leading employer associations hardly made him an endearing public figure,

television. See Jillian Becker, *Hitler’s Children: The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang* (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1977), 239.

<sup>87</sup> For more on ‘militant democracy’, see Willy Brandt, as quoted in Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 277. Also noteworthy here are Helmut Kohl’s comments in the Bundestag in *Verhandlungen des Bundestages* (hereafter VDB), (VII.) Deutscher Bundestag, 155. Sitzung, 13 March 1975, and VDB (VIII.) Deutscher Bundestag, 22. Sitzung, 20 April 1977; and remarks from Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in ‘Erklärung der Bundesregierung vom Bundeskanzler Helmut Schmidt’, VDB (VIII.) Deutscher Bundestag, 22. Sitzung, 20 April 1977.

<sup>88</sup> Theo Sommer, ‘Kein Staat der Schlappschwänze’, *Die Zeit*, 9 June 1972. Sommer later served as the editor-in-chief (1973–92) and publisher (1992–2000) of *Die Zeit*.

<sup>89</sup> See Passmore, ‘The Art of Hunger’, 36–7, 41–3; and Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 219–21.

<sup>90</sup> In an effort to kidnap Hanns-Martin Schleyer, RAF guerrillas killed his bodyguards, Reinhold Brändte, Roland Pieler and Helmut Ulmer, and his unarmed chauffeur Heinz Marcisz, firing over 100 bullets in ninety seconds. For detailed analyses of the RAF’s tactical transition to kidnappings, see especially Tobias Wunschik, *Baader-Meinhofs Kinder: Die zweite Generation der RAF* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997); Lutz Hachmeister, *Schleyer: Eine deutsche Geschichte* (Munich: Verlag CH Beck, 2004); and Butz Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum: die Geschichte der RAF* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 2004).



the RAF incurred the wrath of German progressives – including Heinrich Böll,<sup>91</sup> Rudi Dutschke,<sup>92</sup> and Herbert Marcuse<sup>93</sup> – by incorporating the murder of Schleyer's driver and three bodyguards in its kidnapping strategy.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, the fact that the guerrillas almost exclusively targeted middle-aged men amplified a perceived crisis of emasculation. 'It is unbearable that a group of revolver-girls can challenge the state together with its police power', lamented an article in *Die Welt*.<sup>95</sup> 'Must every male citizen [*Bürger*] now consider that a violent death will one day face him in the form of a young woman?' asked *Der Spiegel*.<sup>96</sup> Concerns over the rising tide of left-wing terrorism were thus often expressed in terms of male anxieties over uncontrollable female violence.

Although the majority of the militants were still men, certain events – including a prison escape and the assassination of the Dresdner Bank chairman Jürgen Ponto – sparked renewed appraisals of women's roles in the guerrilla underground. The behaviour of urban guerrillas housed in all-female prisons became a cause of great concern in the 1970s, often leading to pronouncements of excessive women's emancipation. Particularly vexing was the situation at Lehrter Street Prison, a women's jail that had come to be known as the justice system's 'problem child', in large part due to the actions of incarcerated guerrillas.<sup>97</sup> With RAF and Movement 2 June women bullying fellow inmates and attacking female guards, the warden was eventually pressed to take the unprecedented step of summoning male prison guards.<sup>98</sup> Events at Lehrter Street Prison were front and centre in summer 1976, when four urban guerrilla women carried out what *Der Spiegel* described as 'the most spectacular jailbreak in the post-war history of the Federal Republic'.<sup>99</sup> The Movement 2 June's Inge Viett, Julianne Plambeck and Gabriele Rollnick, along with the Red Army Faction's Monika Berberich, managed to file through the protective bars on a window in the television lounge, overpower two female guards and climb down the outer prison walls using a makeshift rope they had fashioned by tying together bed sheets, before disappearing into the darkness of the West Berlin night.<sup>100</sup> *Der Spiegel* examined the episode in a July cover story, in which the magazine revisited

<sup>91</sup> Heinrich Böll, 'Es wäre verhängnisvoll', *Die Zeit*, 17 Sept. 1977.

<sup>92</sup> Rudi Dutschke, 'Kritik am Terror muß klarer werden', *Die Zeit*, 17 Sept. 1977.

<sup>93</sup> Herbert Marcuse, 'Mord darf keine Waffe sein', *Die Zeit*, 17 Sept. 1977.

<sup>94</sup> For discussions of the Schleyer attack see Hachmeister, *Schleyer*, 327, 331; Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 402–6; and Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 250.

<sup>95</sup> 'Der Kanzler ist im Wort', *Die Welt*, 1 Aug. 1977.

<sup>96</sup> This question originally appeared in *Bonner Welt*, but was revisited in 'Frauen im Untergrund'.

<sup>97</sup> 'Hysterie bei den Kontrollen', *Die Welt*, 30 Dec. 1974.

<sup>98</sup> See Valeska Voss-Dietrich, 'Beschimpfungen, Tritte, Bisse, Wutausbrüche, Meuterei: Die weiblichen Mitglieder der Baader-Meinhof-Bande terrorisieren Mitgefängene und Beamtinnen', *Die Welt*, 30 Dec. 1974.

<sup>99</sup> 'Ausbruch in Berlin'.

<sup>100</sup> 'Der Ausbruch', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8 July 1976; 'Sorgenkind der Berliner Justiz', *Badische Zeitung*, 8 July 1976; and 'Ausbruch in Berlin'. See also Inge Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser. Autobiographie* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), 101–9.

the controversial thesis proposed by Günther Nollau four years earlier, that female guerrillas suffered from an ‘excess of women’s liberation’.<sup>101</sup>

Jürgen Offebach of the *Stuttgarter Nachrichten* interpreted the prison break as emblematic of a new ‘era of terror’. On 9 July, just two days after the four guerrilla women escaped from their West Berlin prison cells, Offebach penned his opinion piece entitled ‘Women as Terror’s Fury’, in which he inquired: ‘From where do these women get their violent energy, their fanatical hatred, their desire for the death of others and themselves?’ The prominent position of women in the urban guerrilla movement provided Offebach with an opportunity to condemn the women’s liberation project in its entirety:

Today women command terror groups, but the battle is not becoming more humane as a result. It is becoming more hostile to life and more filled with hatred. That also belongs to the new experiences and perversions of this era of terror.

Not only did the author see emancipation as a catalyst for women’s crimes, but he also classified female commando leaders as a ‘perversion’ that only served to accentuate the brutality of urban guerrilla violence. For Offebach, the answers to the disturbing questions he formulated were to be found in ‘female nature’ and biological difference. Citing work in the field of psychology, he claimed that ‘women have more scruples and angst than men’, causing them to compensate for their fears by ‘unleashing more aggressive impulses’.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, male perpetrators still vastly outnumbered their female counterparts in overall crime rates in Offebach’s West Germany, just as men outnumbered women in the nation’s guerrilla underground.

Although the RAF’s six-week long kidnapping and execution of Hanns-Martin Schleyer eclipsed all previous German guerrilla actions in terms of media coverage and public outrage, the group’s murder of Jürgen Ponto two months earlier marked a crucial transition in tactics. Targeted assassinations had been carried out before, including the Movement 2 June’s attack on a West Berlin judge, Günter von Drenkmann, in November 1974 and the RAF’s murder of the attorney general, Siegfried Buback, in April 1977.<sup>103</sup> However, unlike these previous victims, Jürgen Ponto did not hold a state office and could not in any way be deemed responsible for the harsh treatment of imprisoned guerrillas.<sup>104</sup> Much like the RAF’s bombing of the Springer Press headquarters in Hamburg five years earlier, the assassination of a business leader broadened the base of potential targets in the public imagination,

<sup>101</sup> ‘Ausbruch in Berlin’.

<sup>102</sup> Offebach, ‘Frauen als Furien des Terrors’.

<sup>103</sup> For a more detailed account of the RAF’s attack on Siegfried Buback, see Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 379–85.

<sup>104</sup> Jürgen Offebach, ‘Der Mord on Ponto’, *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, 1 Aug. 1977. For the Movement 2 June’s attempts to justify its attack on Günter von Drenkmann, see ‘Das Attentat: Das wurde der Präsident’, 10 Nov. 1974, and ‘Zum Attentat auf Berlins höchsten Richter: Terror oder Gegenwehr? Wer ist über den Tod Günter von Drenkmann ‘bestürzt’ und weshalb?’, in *Der Blues. Gesammelte Texte der Bewegung 2. Juni/Band I* (Dortmund: Antiquariat Schwarzer Stern, 2001), 195–8. For the opinions of the RAF’s incarcerated core leaders, see ‘“Wir werden in den Durstreik treten”’: Spiegel-Fragen an Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, Gudrun Ensslin und Jan-Carl Raspe’, *Der Spiegel*, 20 Jan. 1975.

alienating the guerrillas from the moral majority. In what appeared to have been a botched kidnapping attempt, two RAF guerrillas, Brigitte Mohnhaupt and Christian Klar, shot the fifty-three-year-old Dresdner Bank chairman inside his suburban Frankfurt home, eliminating any hope of a prisoner exchange.<sup>105</sup> Ponto was thus the first prominent business leader, followed later by Schleyer and Walter Palmer, whom urban guerrillas chose to kidnap in large part for what they described as 'exchange value'.<sup>106</sup> But there was something even more unsettling about the attack on Jürgen Ponto. The fact that the RAF guerrillas had used the daughter of one of Ponto's close friends to gain access to his home, even arriving with a bouquet of flowers, convinced contemporary observers that the guerrilla movement had descended into uncharted depths of depravity.<sup>107</sup>

For the popular news weekly *Der Spiegel*, the Ponto murder demanded yet another reassessment of gender relations. In its 8 August issue, which featured the headline 'Terrorists: Women and Violence' on its cover, the liberal *Spiegel* provided its readers with four separate articles addressing this single problematic.<sup>108</sup> *Der Spiegel's* Gerhard Mauz argued that commando member Susanne Albrecht's apparent betrayal of her godfather proved that 'there isn't any humanity left' in West Germany's radical left-wing scene.<sup>109</sup> The feature article, however – 'Women in the Underground: "Something Irrational"' – once again revisited the remarks made by Günther Nollau five years earlier:

In the toughest phase in West German terrorism so far women play an egregiously morbid role. Almost two-thirds of the terrorists in the Federal Republic with a warrant out for their arrest are women, mostly important daughters from dignified families who have descended into the depths of murder and manslaughter with self-destructive desire ... For the former head of the Federal

<sup>105</sup> For the RAF's official statement on the Ponto attack, see Susanne Albrecht aus einem Kommando der RAF, 'Erschießung von Jürgen Ponto und Anschlag auf das Bundesanwaltschaft in Karlsruhe: Erklärung vom 14. 8. 1977', in Manfred Burdich, ed., *Die Erklärungen der RAF* (Münster: MV-Verlag, 2005), 134–5. See also Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 386–93. Ponto's daughter's reaction can be found in Corinna Ponto, 'Die Ermordung von Jürgen Ponto: "Er wollte nie ein Mittel für Erpressung werden"', in Anne Siemens, ed., *Für die RAF war er das System, für mich der Vater. Die andere Geschichte des deutschen Terrorismus* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 2007), 106–26.

<sup>106</sup> Stefan Wisniewski, one of Schleyer's kidnappers, addressed the challenges of preserving the captive's exchange value in his memoirs, *Wir waren so unheimlich konsequent: Ein Gespräch zur Geschichte der RAF mit Stefan Wisniewski* (Berlin: ID Verlag, 2003), 42–3: 'wir hatten deshalb auch die Befürchtung, dass er nicht mehr austauschfähig ist, wenn wir ihn weiter runtermachen'. Inge Viett discussed the concept of 'Austauschwert' in Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 132. Historian Jeremy Varon examines the concept of 'exchange value' in Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 233. For Schleyer's son's reflections on the kidnapping and murder of his father, see Hanns-Eberhard Schleyer, 'Geiselnhaft und Ermordung von Hanns Martin Schleyer: "Keine hatte gedacht, dass es wirklich passieren würde"', in *Für die RAF war er das System*, 127–83.

<sup>107</sup> For an analysis of the symbolic meaning of the bouquet exchange preceding Ponto's murder, see Ilse Korte-Pucklitsch, Bernd Peschken and Michael Rutschky, 'Deutsche Gedanken zum Terrorismus', *Merkur, Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken*, 32, 2 (1978), 173–94.

<sup>108</sup> See 'Frauen im Untergrund'; 'Die Täter leben in absoluter Inzucht'; 'Terror-Szene: Gruppenbild mit Damen'; and Gerhard Mauz, 'Ein Phänomen der Verzweiflung', in *Der Spiegel*, 8 Aug. 1977.

<sup>109</sup> Mauz, 'Phänomen der Verzweiflung'.

Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Günther Nollau, 'there is something irrational in this entire matter'. Perhaps, means Nollau, it is 'an excess of women's liberation'. That may well be.<sup>110</sup>

Women's participation in political radicalism was no longer interpreted as a mere symptom of left-wing violence, but as the very cause of its intensification. However, this line of argument depended on the erasure of Christian Klar's involvement in the Ponto murder, as the spotlight was directed at Brigitte Mohnhaupt and Susanne Albrecht, the latter one of many 'important daughters from dignified families' to get caught up in guerrilla violence.

### III

The reality of women's experiences inside urban guerrilla groups belies the depictions of excessive emancipation projected by the West German media. In fact, evidence suggests that much more complex gender relations prevailed in the inner circles of militant left-wing organisations, as expressions of male dominance and misogynistic outbursts were quite common. Excursions to Palestinian paramilitary training camps in the Middle East were particularly vexing for West Germany's female guerrillas, who were forced to endure the 'paternalistic attitude' of their male hosts, who thought nothing of excluding their female guests from certain forms of training.<sup>111</sup> On German soil RAF women had to cope with Andreas Baader, whom Leith Passmore has described as a 'leader and cult figure [who] . . . wielded his power largely through verbal abuse, humiliation and cultivating cumulative peer pressure'.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, the 1976 testimony of RAF members during the Stammheim trial left little doubt that Baader had been the group's unquestioned leader, often asserting his will through threats and tirades.<sup>113</sup> He also displayed a misogynistic side to his character when he referred to female group members as 'cunts', 'waiting maids' and 'the plague'.<sup>114</sup> Such gender bias was certainly not limited to the RAF, as the disciplinary structure of the Kunzelmann-dominated Tupamaros West Berlin featured the censorship of letters sent by female members to the outside world.<sup>115</sup> In his 1975 autobiography, fellow Tupamaros (and Movement 2 June) member Bommi Baumann described his male comrades as 'pure oppressors of women' who treated female guerrillas 'like

<sup>110</sup> 'Frauen im Untergrund'.

<sup>111</sup> For more on the life of German women inside Palestinian paramilitary camps, see Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 173–5, 262–3.

<sup>112</sup> Passmore, 'The Art of Hunger', 32–59.

<sup>113</sup> See 'Landeskriminalamt Baden-Württemberg, 9. Mai 1977 an die Staatsanwaltschaft, Betreff: Ermittlungsverfahren gegen die Mitglieder der Baader-Meinhof-Bande Irmgard Möller und Bernhard Braun (Zeugenvernehmung Müllers)', HIS: RAF-Sammlung 1. Generation: So 01/014,003; HIS: RAF-Sammlung 1. Generation, Gr,M/024,017; 'Kronzeuge: Baader war der Kopf', *Rheinische Post*, 16 July 1976; and Ulf G. Sterberger, 'Andreas hatte klar die Funktion von Führung', *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 10 Aug. 1976.

<sup>114</sup> Sarah Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism: Language, Violence, and Identity* (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 188, 213. See also RAF-dropout Beate Sturm, as quoted in 'Frauen im Untergrund'.

<sup>115</sup> See Annetrin Bruhn, as quoted in Kraushaar, *Die Bombe*, 195.

sex objects', although he too bragged about the number of 'schoolgirls' and 'chicks' who clung to him in the underground scene.<sup>116</sup> The sense of liberation felt by female group members stemmed from their experience as urban guerrillas rather than their position as women.

While some female guerrillas had been involved in the women's liberation movement, attempts to posit a straightforward correlation between feminism and terrorist violence were misleading. First of all, it must be noted that the paucity of German women who joined urban guerrilla groups – about 75 in total through 1978<sup>117</sup> – paled in comparison to the number of veterans of 'broads' committees' and anti-authoritarian childcare centres who migrated to the abortion reform campaign and other legal feminist projects.<sup>118</sup> Guerrilla women, on the other hand, frequently derided the women's liberation project as being tainted with bourgeois individualism, and female RAF prisoners often refused to meet sympathetic feminist visitors.<sup>119</sup> Movement 2 June member Inge Viett even claimed that 'none of [her comrades] came from the women's liberation movement', and while this might be an overstatement, a brief outline of Viett's life illustrates the diversity of routes that could lead one to the guerrilla underground.<sup>120</sup> Abandoned in infancy by her mother at the end of the Second World War and raised as an orphan in rural Schleswig-Holstein, Inge learned the painful lessons of social injustice at a young age. As Viett recounts in her 1999 autobiography, *I Was Never More Fearless*, it was her life experiences as a domestic servant-in-training and as a stripper in Hamburg's St Pauli district rather than exposure to middle-class feminism that led her to discover the 'commodified nature of gender relations'.<sup>121</sup>

The writings of the RAF co-founder Ulrike Meinhof demonstrate that the decision to join men in anti-imperialist armed struggle can hardly be viewed as a natural extension of engagement with the women's liberation movement. In the late 1960s, as a liberal journalist for the magazine *Konkret*, Meinhof had defended the founders of the Council for the Liberation of Women for breaking away from the male-dominated Socialist German Student Union (SDS), deriding men as 'functionaries of capitalist society who impose oppression on women'.<sup>122</sup> However,

<sup>116</sup> Baumann, *How It All Began*, 26, 29, 75.

<sup>117</sup> Schmidtchen, 'Terroristische Karrieren', 23. One-third of 227 left-wing radicals sought, indicted or condemned for terrorist actions or membership in a terrorist organisation through 1978 were women.

<sup>118</sup> For women's participation in 'broads' committees (*Weiberräte*), anti-authoritarian childcare centres (*Kinderläden*) and abortion reform in West Germany, see Schulz, 'Echoes of Provocation', 137–54; Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 89. For more on the new women's movement's politicisation of sex, see Herzog, 'Between Coitus and Commodification', 261–86.

<sup>119</sup> Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism*, 199.

<sup>120</sup> Inge Viett, as quoted in 'Die Mädchen fielen aus ihrer Rolle', *Die Tageszeitung*, 26–27 Oct. 1997. Examples of female guerrillas who had previously participated in the Council for the Liberation of Women at the end of the 1960s include Marianne Herzog, Brigitte Asdonk and Annerose Reise. See Diewald-Kerkmann, *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*, 82, 85, 103.

<sup>121</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 66.

<sup>122</sup> Ulrike Meinhof, 'Women in the SDS: Acting on Their Own Behalf', in *Everybody Talks About the Weather ... We Don't: The Writings of Ulrike Meinhof*, ed. Karin Bauer (New York: Seven Stories

she moved away from this position as an urban guerrilla, attacking the women's liberation movement for 'creat[ing] in the bourgeoisie a situation of competition with men', a process she disparagingly labelled 'cunt chauvinism'.<sup>123</sup> Female guerrillas, as Ulrike Meinhof saw it, strove only for 'women's liberation through the armed anti-imperialist struggle, not against the *cocks* but rather against the *cops*'.<sup>124</sup> For Meinhof, joining the urban guerrilla underground constituted a radical departure from her prior feminist politics.

Of course, anti-feminist rage was not the only lens through which people viewed women's participation in urban guerrilla violence, and female scholars in particular took the lead in formulating viable alternatives to the excessive emancipation thesis. The establishment of women's groups, women's centres and feminist publications in the 1970s provided new spaces where women could share their experiences and develop strategies for raising public consciousness of gender discrimination and domestic abuse.<sup>125</sup> Public opinion surveys from the start of the decade indicated a growing recognition of the gender inequality embedded in West German society,<sup>126</sup> and a larger portion of society was becoming conscious of the extent of everyday violence directed against women.<sup>127</sup> Writing an opinion piece for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, entitled 'Violence against Women – Violence from Women: Why Is Women's Participation in Terrorism So High?' during the German Autumn of 1977, a psychoanalyst, Margarete Mitscherlich-Nielsen, attempted to supplant the image of man-hating Amazons one encountered in the press with a recognition that female guerrillas struggled to process a contradictory conception of gender relations projected by their parents.<sup>128</sup> In an interdisciplinary conference held at Eichholz Castle in 1978, Suzanne von Paczensky, a journalist, argued that, given the pervasiveness of the constant aggression experienced by women in public and in private, the high

Press, 2008), 211; this essay initially appeared in the magazine *Konkret* in 1968. For discussions of Meinhof's public support of early feminists during her time as a journalist, see Schildt and Siegfried, 'Youth, Consumption, and Politics', 21; Uta G. Poiger, 'Imperialism and Consumption: Two Tropes in West German Radicalism', in Schildt and Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*, 167; and Kersting, 'Left-wing Radicalism', 360–4. For a discussion of the '68ers' unintended contributions to the commodification of youth rebellion through their destruction of conservative obstacles to consumption, see Stephan Malinowski and Alex Sedlmaier, "'1968" als Katalysator der Konsumgesellschaft: Performative kommerzielle Adaptionen und ihre gegenseitige Durchdringung', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32 (2006), 238–67.

<sup>123</sup> See Meinhof's letters in HIS: RAF-Sammlung 1. Generation, Me,U/008, 002 and Me,U/025,005. For a thorough analysis of Meinhof's use of the term 'cunt' in her prison letters, see Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism*, 199, 209.

<sup>124</sup> Ulrike Meinhof, as quoted in Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism*, 200 (emphasis added). For more on the tendency of female guerrillas to define themselves primarily as revolutionaries rather than as women, see Diewald-Kerkmann, *Frauen, Terrorismus und Justiz*, 45.

<sup>125</sup> Herzog, *Sex After Fascism*, 226; Altbach, 'The New German's Movement', 7.

<sup>126</sup> 'Men Advantaged', in Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, ed., *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1967–1980* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981), 336. A 1972 survey found that 64 per cent of respondents felt that men possessed an advantage in professional opportunities, compared with 44 per cent of respondents in 1967. My interpretation is that this change indicates a growing awareness of gender inequalities, as opposed to an increase in gender disparities within that five-year period.

<sup>127</sup> See Mitscherlich-Nielsen, 'Gewalt gegen Frauen'.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

number of female guerrillas in West Germany was quite predictable, if 'terrorism emanates from an insensible rage against the threat of violence'.<sup>129</sup>

We should also consider that West Germany's urban guerrillas suffered from an added layer of abuse and violence that was self-inflicted. Margarete Mitscherlich-Nielsen and Suzanne von Paczensky were both correct in making connections between women's participation in the urban guerrilla movement and an extensive Christian tradition of female martyrdom, which was often expressed through penance or self-starvation.<sup>130</sup> In this context, rather than reacting to an excess of liberation, urban guerrilla women – and, in many respects, men – can be seen as suffering from an excess of self-sacrifice, in which the terrorist lifestyle afforded them the ultimate opportunity to martyr themselves for a greater cause.<sup>131</sup> This point was not lost on the criminologist Helga Einsele, who likened the female guerrillas of the twentieth century to the female anarchists of the nineteenth century (rather than contemporary feminists), largely because both sets of women 'played the role of independently thinking and independently acting human[s] . . . fight[ing] for the victims of society' as opposed to their own position.<sup>132</sup> The collective hunger strikes carried out by West Germany's incarcerated guerrillas can thus be seen as an instance in which competitive radicalisation and a commitment to self-sacrifice manifested themselves in the pursuit of martyrdom, with Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin seizing the initiative by explicitly demanding of RAF inmates death by starvation.<sup>133</sup> Importantly, the concept of excessive self-sacrifice helps us to understand the discrepancy between the dominant women and soft men one encountered in the press and the more complex gender relations that characterised daily life in Germany's urban guerrilla underground.

The 'excess of women's liberation' thesis voiced by Günther Nollau was built on the false assertion that women formed a majority in West Germany's guerrilla ranks, and a domineering and masculine one at that. Of course, there *was* a demographic imbalance in the urban guerrilla underground, but it was to be found in the gender and social position of the victims. Whether it was the president of the West Berlin court of appeals, the country's chief federal prosecutor, the chairman of the board of Dresdner Bank, or the president of the Federal Employers' Association, the

<sup>129</sup> Suzanne von Paczensky, 'Ursachen des Terrorismus: eine Podiumsdiskussion zum Thema "die individuellen, gesellschaftlichen und ideologischen Ursachen des Terrorismus"', in *Freiheit und Sicherheit: Die Demokratie wehrt sich gegen den Terrorismus* (Bonn: Schriftenreihe der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1979), 181–2.

<sup>130</sup> See Mitscherlich-Nielsen, 'Gewalt gegen Frauen'; and Suzanne von Paczensky's comments in 'Ursachen des Terrorismus', 181–2. For more on the Christian upbringing of RAF core members Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin, see Becker, *Hitler's Children*, 65–8, 110, 114–19; 'Frauen im Untergrund', 26.

<sup>131</sup> RAF member Holger Meins perished during a 1974 prison hunger strike, in which the 1.90 m Meins was reduced to a mere 91 lb. In a statement released just nine days before his death, Meins declared that the guerrillas' mission was nothing less than a 'fight until death'. See Peter Brückner, *Ulrike Meinhof und die deutsche Verhältnisse* (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 1995), 175.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with Helga Einsele in 'Die Täter leben in absoluter Inzucht', *Der Spiegel*, 8 Aug. 1977. Einsele once served as Gudrun Ensslin's counsellor in prison.

<sup>133</sup> Passmore, 'The Art of Hunger', 44–5.

kidnappings and assassinations carried out by German guerrillas invariably targeted the political and industrial leaders of society, all of whom were male. Rather than a symptom of excessive women's liberation, the urban guerrilla movement should be viewed as a lifestyle that functioned on two levels: it demanded self-sacrifice and a steadfast commitment to a higher cause, while providing a politically frustrated generation of men *and* women an opportunity to lord it over the men who commanded West German society. Urban guerrillas strove to create situations in which, through the barrel of a loaded gun, they could invert the power hierarchies embedded in West German society and enforce their own sense of social justice.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Particularly enlightening in this regard are the comments of RAF member Volker Speitel in 'Wir wollten alles und gleichzeitig nichts', *Der Spiegel*, 11 Aug. 1980, 30–6.