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Review of Claire Bielby. *Violent Women in Print: Representations in the West German Print Media of the 1960s and 1970s*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012

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Recommended Citation

Trnka, Jamie, "Review of Claire Bielby. *Violent Women in Print: Representations in the West German Print Media of the 1960s and 1970s*. Rochester: Camden House, 2012" (2014). *Faculty Scholarship*. 4. https://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/modern_languages_faculty/4

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mit Koselleck bietet, allerdings nicht. Kosellecks Nachlass wird derzeit im Deutschen Literaturarchiv, Marbach am Neckar, und im Deutschen Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg überhaupt erst erschlossen. Nach Abschluss dieser noch bis mindestens Mitte 2013 dauernden Arbeiten werden neue Studien über Koselleck zu erwarten sein, die, quellengesättigter, Olsens Überblick ergänzen und biografisch unterfüttern werden.

Stefan Jordan, *Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*

Violent Women in Print: Representations in the West German Print Media of the 1960s and 1970s. By Clare Bielby. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012. Pp. 225. Cloth \$80.00. ISBN 978-1571135308.

Clare Bielby's monograph takes as its primary object representations of West German terrorism in the 1970s that foreground women's participation in political violence. To that end, it examines representations in the print media of nonpolitical, violent women since the 1960s alongside representations of political violence in the 1970s, arguing that the press did not distinguish among differently motivated acts of violence. Bielby considers the coverage of three trials of women for murder or incitement to murder, most prominent among them Vera Brühne's 1961–1962 trial for incitement to double murder. According to Bielby, all of these representations must be understood within a media climate engaged in shoring up public anxieties about changing gender roles and public sexuality.

In producing “visual demonizations of the supposed paradox of women taking rather than giving life” (29), print media, she argues, pursued social agendas that marginalized second-wave feminism and undermined women's political agency. They alternately infantilized women, collapsed political dissent and allegedly aberrant sexuality, and transformed threatening women into desirable women. Bielby organizes the book's four main chapters around the exclusion of violent women from motherhood and the nation; the equation of violent femininity with hysteria; the sexualization and masculinization of violent women; and the language of “filth” and the abjection of the violent woman. In each chapter, she shows how media effectively contained and minimized the symbolic threat of women's violence to established social orders.

By looking at continuities and ruptures in the representation of violent women in postwar West Germany, Bielby takes an important step toward recontextualizing the portrayal of women terrorists in the media. Yet much work remains to be done to address the numerous stumbling blocks that such an analysis poses and which Bielby seems at times to intuit, but not address. One example is her reference to dramatic

changes in visual sexual content in the media between the time of the Brühne case and the height of media attention to women terrorists, a development she attributes to the sexual revolution in West Germany. While she suggests that such changes might account for substantial differences between her nonpolitical and political examples, more work is needed to push this potentially fruitful yet speculative argument even further.

All in all, some elements of her argument about an enduring iconography of the violent woman remain too broad to offer real historical or cultural insight into the material. Sexist and heterosexist discourses in nineteenth-century criminology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis persist as commonsensical ideology, but it is unclear how her recurring references to these discourses support her argument about 1970s West Germany. Indeed, there are moments when her invocation of iconographic types masks other crucial elements of the images in question. For example, treating photos of Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin in uniform, walking the prison yard, as “sculptural” and legible within a tradition of aestheticizing female madness obscures an alternate set of readings that could just as well associate the same photographs with images from Nazi concentration camps.

Along similar lines, prioritizing as a key discursive frame the nation writ large, and the role ascribed to women in bourgeois nationalisms all over the world, fails to elucidate representations of violent West German women and nationalist narratives in the more complex way they deserve. Reference to Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (London, 1983) and the role it ascribes to print capitalism would require us, at a minimum, to consider the vast differences between infrastructure, authorship, and readership in the Americas of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries, on the one hand, and postwar West Germany on the other. The gesture is there; the argument is not.

The same holds true when Bielby relies on other theorists. The analytic yield of Julia Kristeva and Mikhail Bakhtin on the “abject” in her chapter on filth and the exclusion of women from a literalized “body politic” is simply not as great as a more sustained engagement with the historically grounded work of Mererid Puw Davies on the “semiotics of dirt,” which Bielby also cites but could have utilized more effectively (“Bodily Issues: The West German Anti-Authoritarian Movement and the Semiotics of Dirt,” in *Uncivilizing Process?* ed. Mary Fullbrook [Amsterdam, 2007]).

A media-studies approach has much to offer discussions of gender in representations of political and nonpolitical violence. But one that consists primarily of close readings of visual materials is bound to come up short. For one, its broad characterization of national media on a left-to-right, “serious”-to-tabloid scale simply does not convey enough about the West German media landscape. Given Bielby’s argument about the agenda-setting character of print media, a serious discussion of

its interaction with other media would have been equally important. This is especially evident in the book's conclusion, which provides examples from the thirtieth anniversary of the 1977 German Autumn from television, feature film, as well as exhibitions and catalogues—examples unquestionably informed by historical print circulation and the captioning of photographic images. Yet the mention of Uli Edel and Bernd Eichinger's 2008 film *Der Baader-Meinhof Komplex* functions more as a hook to establish the RAF's enduring relevance instead of being subject to media analysis. After all, which other RAF film is so meticulously staged around historical photographic images?

More troubling than missed opportunities and the incompleteness of a media analysis limited to close readings rather than attention to media's materiality is the (presumably inadvertent) reproduction of a strand of media discourse in the analysis itself. Bielby concludes that the media (re)produces an iconography of "mythical monstrous female evil," in which violent women once again "transcend their historical and cultural specificity" (173). Universalizing psychoanalytic approaches to those images and a tendency to relegate historical context to a now familiar introductory chronology fail to restore that specificity—a failure that extends beyond Bielby's study to cultural studies of political violence more broadly.

Jamie H. Trnka, *The University of Scranton*

Small Town & Village in Bavaria: The Passing of a Way of Life. By Peter H. Merkl. New York: Berghahn, 2012. Pp. 263. Cloth \$90.00. ISBN 978-0857453471.

Amerikanische Historiker haben zur Geschichte Bayerns immer wieder Bemerkenswertes geschrieben. Nun untersucht Peter H. Merkl, in Bayern geboren, Professor Emeritus of Political Sciences an der University of California in Santa Barbara und Autor von Studien und Quelleneditionen zur Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, den gesellschaftlichen Wandel in der bayerischen Provinz seit den 1960er Jahren und die Rolle politischer Raumplanung in ihm. Wie hat sich die Lebenswelt verändert, was hat der Modernisierungsdruck einer staatlichen Gebietsreform dabei bewirkt, wie gehen die Menschen damit um?

Als Beispiel dient eine von dieser Reform besonders betroffene Region, das westliche Mittelfranken mit dem Zentrum Ansbach: vorwiegend agrarisch-kleingewerblich, abseits der Ballungsräume und großer Verkehrsachsen, mit einer Reihe kleiner Städte mit augenfällig reicher Geschichte, doch von der Industrialisierung kaum berührt und deshalb seit dem 19. Jahrhundert zur stagnierenden Peripherie geworden: wirtschaftlich, sozial und kulturell. Um sowohl die Gebietsreform als auch die Erfahrung der Menschen mit ihr, die objektive wie die subjektive Seite zu fassen, hat Merkl nicht nur amtliche Dokumente, Broschüren, Statistiken und dergleichen