PanDora, or Erwin and Dora Panofsky and the Private History of Ideas*

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This town holds girls a-plenty
With nothing much to do.
But Romeo was twenty,
And I am fifty-two.

(ERWIN PANOFSKY, Princeton, New Jersey, 1944)

Thus the philosopher abhors marriage, together with all that might persuade him to it,—marriage as hindrance and catastrophe on his path to optimum. Which great philosopher, so far, has been married? Heracitus, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Schopenhauer—were not; indeed it is impossible to even think about them as married. A married philosopher belongs to comedy, that is my presupposition: and that exception, Socrates, the mischievous Socrates, appears to have married ironice, simply in order to demonstrate this proposition. (FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, On the Genealogy of Morals, 1887, Third Essay, sec. 7)

The mythical figure Pandora with her little box has long been considered to be the source of all toil, illness, and despair in the world. She also provided the nickname for one of the best-known art historian pairs of the twentieth century: Erwin and Dora Panofsky. In and around Princeton, New Jersey, in the decades immediately following the Second World War, the eminent art historian Erwin Panofsky was dubbed “Pan,” and his formidable wife, Dora (née Mosse) Panofsky, answered to “Dora.” In 1950 the couple resolved to accept the epithet as scholarly fate: “Dora and myself have lately begun to

* In Memoriam Christopher M. Meyer: 1980–2009. I wish to thank the editors and three anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments on drafts of this article. Earlier versions benefited from the suggestions of participants of Yale University’s Whitney Humanities Center Fellowship and its Modern European History Colloquium, especially those of Mia Genoni, David Possen, Norma Thompson, Adam Tooze, Jay Winter, Chris Wood, and Ben Yousey-Hindes. I particularly thank Lionel Gossman, Marion Kaplan, Samuel Moyn, Paul Robinson, Eugene Sheppard, and James J. Sheehan for their ongoing conversations about these issues. And I greatly appreciate Charlotte Schoell-Glass’s willingness to make the materials of the Warburg-Archiv available to me, as well as Marianne Pieper’s generous assistance with the archive.
take an interest in the character of Pandora (nomen et omen),” Pan wrote. That summer they began in earnest to research Pandora and took great pleasure in the connection between life and scholarship. The publication of their 1956 collaborative work, Pandora’s Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol, made this bon mot explicit: “Pan + Dora = Pandora.”

In laying bare the intimate relationship behind the scholarly deed, Pandora’s Box was highly suggestive. Each of the reviewers noted with amusement that Pandora was written by “PanDora.” But it is also clear that they failed to appreciate the full implications of the joke. The rules of scholarship dictate that we overcome our private allegiances to engage in academic inquiry. Despite our waning confidence in that process today, at the end of the nineteenth century this myth of objectivity grounded the epistemological foundation of the historical profession. The Panofskys seemed to be saying what any good postmodernist knows to be true: our personal affinities inevitably shape our scholarly interests. Neither scholarship nor ideas that are the object of study emerge ex nihilo. Yet the Panofskys pushed further and hinted that those sources could sometimes be banal, even base. Just as many other scholars efface these intimate origins for the public performance of scholarship, historians, too, often overlook the family—and, specifically, marriage—as a legitimate site for the development of ideas. The dual story of PanDora and Pandora, then, strikes at a central dilemma for the history of ideas: the bearing of our private lives on the public pursuit of scholarship. And it offers us occasion to reflect on how we as historians account for the conditions required for scholarship and to signal new directions in which the writing of intellectual history might go.

Tracing the figure of Pandora in European literature and art from the classical to the modern period, Pandora’s Box represented a continuation of iconology, the unique interdisciplinary approach innovated by the historian of art and civilization Aby Warburg and developed by the young Pan in Weimar-era Hamburg. Organized around Warburg’s Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (hereafter, the Warburg Library) and devoted to the Nachleben der Antike (survival of antiquity)—in particular, mythological motifs in
medieval and Renaissance art—their aim was to achieve a holistic account of an artwork in its time. Indeed, the motto of the Warburg school might properly be *fons et origo*, an embrace of the classical notion that ideas have a “source and origin.” To uncover an aggregation of sources whence ideas and icons emerge, these iconologists spent a lifetime excavating evidence of cultural patronage, urban festivals, and astrological design. So why should the private life remain off limits?

Pan, on more than one occasion, jokingly acknowledged the intimate nature of art history. “I can understand that from the point of view of an English gentleman,” he later recalled, “the art historian is apt to look like a fellow who compares and analyzes the charms of his feminine acquaintances in public instead of making love to them in private or writing up their family trees.”

For the jovial Pan art history was akin to kissing and telling. Indeed a similar mischievousness seemed to motivate an inquiry into the symbology of Pandora qua female womb. But *Pandora’s Box* was not merely transgressive. The publication of the book also touched on pressing scholarly issues concerning authorship and authority, gender relations and intellectual production—issues that have enormous epistemological consequences for the history of ideas. The longer history of PanDora—the couple—reveals that treating both marriage as a serious institution of intellectual life and the lives of scholars as social mechanisms for ideas can produce new interpretive possibilities for intellectual history at large.

Despite her status as a trained art historian, Dora was shut out of the Warburg Library and unable to play an officially acknowledged role. Somewhat remarkably she would only get her real start as a scholar at the age of fifty-eight, after she and Pan had resettled in America. Though she penned a few well-received articles in this period, Dora’s presence as a coauthor of *Pandora’s Box* befuddled reviewers. On the one hand, her credentials were elevated in anticipation of the publication; on the other, her involvement, as we will see, still assured its reception as a mere “private affair.” This subordinate relationship of the private life to scholarship was reinforced by the subject matter: the gradual effacement of the Pandora myth over the course of Western thought and art. As the first “beautiful evil,” according to Hesiod’s classical texts, Pandora guaranteed that all future women would be nothing

5 Following Warburg’s premature death in 1929 and the library’s exile to London in 1933, Pan would bring this methodological approach to America where it would survive, albeit in a revised form, as the basis for art history in the Anglo-American world. The story of the Warburg circle’s development in Weimar-era Hamburg and its passage to America is told in my book on Aby Warburg, Ernst Cassirer, and Erwin Panofsky (in contract, University of Chicago Press).

but trouble.\textsuperscript{7} Pan, who once described women as animals who prey on time (\textit{Zeitraubtiere}), did not necessarily disagree.\textsuperscript{8} For that reason Pan’s colleague Warburg also warned his assistants not to marry.\textsuperscript{9} As for female students, Warburg assumed they would abandon their careers for their husbands. “It would be [striking] to assess statistically how many crimes marital love (\textit{Amor nuptialis}) has on its conscience against nascent intellectual life,” he wrote in an exasperated entry in the diary of the Warburg Library, “A dreadfully high percentage, even without nuptials.”\textsuperscript{10}

But women were also unavoidable. According to Hesiod, men who did not marry were no better off.\textsuperscript{11} And scholars in this situation were even less so. A male scholar might claim that he wanted a wife who would “stay out of his study,” but he would be protesting too much. As Bonnie Smith wryly observed in \textit{The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice}, such a male scholar was also likely to assume that his wife would be able to “decipher [his] horrible scrawl and copy [his] manuscripts for the printer.”\textsuperscript{12} The scholar’s wife might even translate Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, or catalog countless images for an iconographic index, as Dora would do on occasion. The publication of \textit{Pandora’s Box} revealed that behind the scholar Pan—according to the Greek, the “knower of all things”—was one Dora, aptly translated as “the giver of all.”

As an uneasy scholarly pair, Pan and Dora could readily join the ranks of such academic couples as Marianne and Max or Simone and Sartre, couples whose legacies have long been the source of biological intrigue. It is not for naught that historians have sought to understand these couples from the perspective of the woman’s forgotten “influence.”\textsuperscript{13} But these complex rela-


\textsuperscript{9} Aby Warburg to Franz Boll, September 13, 1913, Heid. Hs. 2740, Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg (UB Heidelberg).


\textsuperscript{11} \textit{The Theogony of Hesiod}, lines 604–7.

\textsuperscript{12} Bonnie G. Smith, \textit{The Gender of History} (Cambridge, MA, 1998), 83.

\textsuperscript{13} Christa Krüger, \textit{Max und Marianne Weber: Tag- und Nachtgeschichten einer Ehe}
tionships also pose many pressing questions at the heart of the discipline, including, in particular, whether women and men are assumed to have different relationships to the perception of objectivity, a question that itself has long been both central and problematic for the writing of history. As Peter Novick argued in his magisterial study That Noble Dream, the attempt to “ground objectivity [finds itself] more in social mechanisms of criticism and evaluation, and less in the qualities of individuals.”

To be sure, there are countless historical tools that we might draw on to identify these “social mechanisms,” including Foucault’s idea of the author or Bourdieu’s scholarly *habitus*. Scholars might even emulate Panofsky’s iconology for its excavation of the myriad origins of symbolism. However, so long as families are not considered legitimate “social mechanisms” in the context of intellectual production, a significant aspect of private life will remain absent from these productive lines of inquiry. The lives and works of husband and wife scholars—that is, the specificity of marriage—provides a compelling place to test this line of inquiry. It also presents perhaps the greatest challenge to our comfort with the inherent risk of reductivism of any “externalist” explanation for ideas.

PanDora’s fraught relationship emerged in the Warburg Library, a unique institution poised between private and public lives; it was present in the gendered division of labor typical of their iconological research; and it traveled to America in the scholarly topics thematized by Dora and her uneasy relationship with Pan. On one level, the story of Pandora narrated by the scholar pair symbolizes the lost female voice as both instigator of and hindrance to scholarship. Pan gave us some indication of what it would mean to recover that voice when he explained that their “little book” would provide an appendix to Jean Seznec’s *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: Mythological Tradition in Renaissance Humanism and Art*, “where poor Pandora is not mentioned at all.”

But more broadly the dual story of Pandora addresses the conditions required for scholarship, conditions that we would often rather, in

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17 Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: Mythological Tradition in Renais-
our subsequent treatment of those ideas, choose to forget. Here, the Panofskys’ book provided only the first step. The Nobel Prize–winning physicist Wolfgang Pauli, whom Pan referred to as the best among “official-Pandora’s-box-openers” (offizielle Pandorabüchsenöffner), suggested yet another. After the book appeared, Pauli predicted, Dora would forever be dubbed “Pandora Panofsky.” “Will there be a future chapter about a literary historian named ‘The Origin of Pandora Panofsky?’” Pauli inquired. As a case study of “PanDora,” the present article represents a modest effort to connect a study of the Panofskys’ scholarly practices with an analysis of their ideas. As such, it shares with the latest wave of scholarship in this realm the goal of treating the family as a legitimate site for intellectual production. The result—complete with its promises and pitfalls—is what we might call a “private history of ideas.”

I. BEYOND THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF IDEAS

Pan’s ambivalent acknowledgment of the private life’s influence on his scholarly interests is matched by the sluggish way in which intellectual historians have come to accept biography as more than mere context for ideas. Though Peter Gay’s “social history of ideas” ushered in a wave of studies that increasingly thematized biography in intellectual life, the acceptance of the private life in intellectual history has occurred only in fits and starts. Highly influenced by Freud, the psychohistories of the 1970s challenged our understanding of “rational” decisions made by historical actors and claimed to expose the “the real reasons for behavior—reasons unknown to the agent.” Often relying on such Freudian categories of analysis as Oedipal conflict and castration anxiety, however, these developments remained limited by abstract universals that too often became “a substitute for [a certain] kind of attention.
to a particular personality and its texture.”

In a compelling essay that connected Durkheim’s changes in sociological thinking to dilemmas he faced in Dreyfus-era France, Jerry Seigel refined this approach. “Linking thought to the personal and social experience out of which it arises,” he wrote, “is the purpose of psychologically oriented biographical studies in intellectual history.”

But the lack of attention to the texture of human relationships in analyzing ideas has persisted. As Leonore Davidoff observes about the state of literature on the family, a divide remains between social historians’ attention to the private and familial, on the one hand, and the history of concepts and concerns for culture, on the other. Davidoff drives this point home in an essay on Freud himself—a figure whose personal “real life” sibling relationships have rarely been correlated with the canon of psychoanalytic concepts.

Given the success of Davidoff’s work on Great Britain, this oversight would seem, at first glance, to be characteristic of yet another German problem. After all, the French case is also rich with theoretical models that bridge materialist sociology and intellectual idealism. Foucault’s theory of authorship spurred Smith’s exposure of the long excoriation of Athénaïs Michelet captured in the phrase “the abusive widow,” for instance. But the grass has always seemed greener on the other side where women scholars were assumed to have more opportunities than at home. Perhaps because the Annales School promoted a methodological openness to a wider variety of social experience, Natalie Zemon Davis revealed frustration that as a place of scholarship it proved undeniably dependent on the private work of women and


23 Ibid., 505.

24 Leonore Davidoff, “The Family in Britain,” in People and Their Environment, ed. F. M. L. Thompson, Cambridge Histories Online, accessed November 16, 2010, DOI: 10.1017/CHOL9780521257893.00; Davidoff and Hall’s work remains a powerful exception. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class (Chicago, 1987); on the importance of this study, see Laura Lee Downs, Writing Gender History, Writing History, ed. Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore (Oxford, 2004), 26, 56 passim.


26 Berghahn and Lässig, Biography between Structure and Agency, 1. In this reading, Joachim Radkau’s inspiring “totalistic” intellectual history, discussed below, is a powerful exception.

yet entirely unwilling to legitimize their contributions in public.\textsuperscript{28} As Davis acknowledged, the “sodality of brothers” only reluctantly “opened to include a younger sister,” the historian Lucie Varga.\textsuperscript{29} Perhaps in Vienna, Davis speculated, women were able to resist this fate. And if not there, then perhaps in England, where Eileen Power maintained a central role in the “mixed” world of the London School of Economics.\textsuperscript{30}

The relationship between the private life and the development of ideas remains a subset of the larger vexed problem between text and context more broadly and, therefore, is subject to debates about the benefits of internalist and externalist approaches. Here historians of science have often taken the lead, and this was certainly the case with their early challenges to the myth of the lone genius. A series of studies presented such couples as Marie and Pierre Curie and Albert Einstein and Mileva Marić as revealing gender diversity at the root of a new collaborative understanding of scientific work.\textsuperscript{31} More recent work in the history of science has moved beyond this “creative couples” approach, both by emphasizing the history of objectivity as a complex combination of sociological and psychological interactions, as in Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison’s masterful \textit{Objectivity}, and by subverting the distinction between private and public in scientific life altogether, as in Deborah Coen’s prize-winning study of the Exners, a three-generation Viennese family of scientists.\textsuperscript{32}

The key intellectual shift in these works is from a focus on the construction of the scholar to an interest in the contexts and institutions that make these ideas possible. This pattern is mirrored by the most promising new scholarship on the private life in intellectual history at large, literature that aspires to treat the family, as one scholar suggests, as a “theater of intellectual activity.”\textsuperscript{33} Here, also, Bourdieu’s attention to the “social conditions of possibility of


\textsuperscript{29} As Carol Fink and Natalie Zemon Davis have revealed, Varga’s relationship to the male historians was far from straightforward. Davis speculates that Varga had a slightly more equitable relationship with Lucien Febvre than did his own wife, Suzanne (Dognon), the former student he married one hour after she arrived in his office (ibid., 123).

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 122–23.


scientific knowledge” emerges as a model, both for explaining the historical delegitimization of the family in intellectual life and possibly for reviving it as a context for future intellectual history.34 If Nietzsche were correct that marriage was odious to the philosopher, as the epigraph above suggests, then the home of the newly married philosopher would require reorganization to accommodate a new mythology. As Gadi Algazi persuasively shows, this is precisely what happened.35 Following the repeal of celibacy rules in fifteenth-century Europe, the scholar learned to elevate the world of ideas above the domestic space in which he now found himself.36 Needless to say, this learned “habitus” did not benefit men and women equally.

While historians today may have shed the belief in objectivity as untainted by personal prejudice, the separation of the public world of ideas from a private life of intimate relationships remains deeply embedded in our scholarly practices. Drawing on Max Weber’s intimate correspondence with his wife, sources discounted by previous scholars as mere “women’s stories” (Tantengeschichten), Joachim Radkau’s commanding biography of the father of sociology represents an exceptional effort to correct this prejudice.37 Weber’s sociological work reminds us that passion is at the root of all thought, and Radkau presents a compelling argument that Weber’s own emotional life is crucial to understanding such key concepts in his oeuvre as Gesellschaft and Gemeinschaft, nature, and charisma. In Weber’s life, as presented by Radkau, no corner is considered too sacred or too private. The pages devoted to Weber’s sexual neuroses and fantasies have led to mixed reactions.38 But it can be difficult to read Economy and Society again without thinking about the role personal psychology played in Weber’s revision of Marx’s ideas.39

For most historians, the challenges to accomplishing Radkau’s “total”

36 Ibid., 11ff.
37 Though Weber’s editor Johannes Winckelmann called Marianne and Max’s letters Tantengeschichten, Radkau saw them as a “treasure trove” (Joachim Radkau, Max Weber: A Biography, trans. Patrick Camiller [London, 2009], 2).
39 Along these lines, it’s a shame that the English translation of Radkau’s German original cut the discussion in which the role of the intimate is most evident: Weber’s
history remain great: scant sources, persistent prejudice against biography as a legitimate field of study, and what one economic historian has recently called the “opacity of family.”40 In the case of PanDora we retain none of Dora’s letters in comparison with the nearly forty written by Pan.41 Moreover, Dora explains this disparity as resulting from her “letter-writing-phobia,” while Pan describes his wife as a “terribly lazy correspondent.”42 Their differing accounts reflect the highly gendered nature of their memories, an asymmetry that only increases the difficulty of excavating the sources.43 But lifting this veil promises to open the “social history of ideas” to a more complete “private history of ideas.”

To achieve a complete understanding of the “social conditions of possibility of scientific knowledge,” then, the historian must also elevate the private life as a legitimate site of intellectual production. Pan for his part was deeply engaged in the process of placing an art object into a given time and place, granting it a history, and, in short, making it knowable. He considered different categories of analysis for art, including Kunstwollen (artist’s will), style, and perspective, before settling on Warburgian iconology, a collective contribution that one historian calls the “primary event” in art history.44 At its best, iconology bridged contextualism and formalism to achieve a truly holistic account of an artwork in its time. Though he often cited the nineteenth-century work of Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, Italienische Forschungen (Italian investigations), as a guide to establishing the epistemological foundations of the field and identified the first section on the “Household of Art” as a metaphor for this project, the household itself never emerged as a

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41 Needless to say, there exist no letters from the time when the pair lived in the same place. When Dora entered the hospital in March 1945 Pan observed that they would resume a ten-year lapse in letter writing (Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, March 22, 1945, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 2:542).
43 Similarly, though William S. Heckscher believed Dora learned Russian in order to be able to read Tolstoy and Dostoevsky in the original, the Princeton scholar Ruth Cherniss decidedly observed that Dora picked the language because she wanted to know just one subject that Pan did not. Richard Cóndida Smith, “A Secretary’s Recollections of Erwin Panofsky: Roxanne S. Heckscher,” Heckscher Archiv 19, 1994, Warburg-Archiv, Hamburg.
legitimate category of art historical analysis. Turning now to PanDora’s household, the questions to be addressed are how this household produced the social conditions for the possibility of iconology and how the iconologists’ excavation of symbols, in turn, might illuminate the scholarly practices of the intimate world.

II. HOUSEHOLDS OF ART AND IDEAS

Pan and Dora’s lives crossed at a crucial historical moment for the emergence of a new breed of German-Jewish scholars, freshly minted female university students, and the professional field of art history. But the pair would not benefit from these developments equally. Born in 1885 to Albert and Caroline Mosse, Dora Mosse enjoyed the prominence and wealth of her extended German-Jewish family in Berlin, a family that for four generations uniquely found respect in circles of both German high culture and the Jewish community. This cosmopolitanism translated to the Mosse daughters’ education, which included schooling in secular studies as well as private tutoring in both French and religion overseen by their progressive father, Albert Mosse, a state-court judge in Berlin. When restrictions on women entering the university were lifted in Berlin in 1908, five years had elapsed since Dora had received her Abitur, the requisite secondary school degree. For women like her, born before 1900, hurdles were high to gain entry to the university. But their father did not hesitate to acquire Latin and Greek tutors for his daughters so that they could pass the rigorous exams and gain admittance to the university. Dora and her sister Martha alone among the fourteen Mosse women pursued a formal university education.

46 Albert Mosse’s brother Rudolf owned a publishing company that included several prestigious newspapers in Germany and abroad. Dora Mosse’s sister Martha Mosse described the balance in their home as “true to old belief—sometimes in conjunction with the strict adherence to antiquated religious customs and regulations—and the doubtless feeling of belonging to the German state and its citizens, its culture, and its history” (EJL; Martha Mosse, “Erinnerungen,” B Rep. 235–07 MF 4170–4171, November 29, 1963, 1, Landesarchiv Berlin).
47 The young girls attended the Arnheimsche höhere Töchterschule and also received private religious tutoring from the leading rabbi in liberal Judaism at the time, Rabbi Hermann Vogelstein, to supplement their secular education (ibid., 2).
48 German universities started admitting women on a case-by-case basis beginning in 1900 and ending in 1909. Patricia Mazon, *Gender and the Modern Research University: The Admission of Women to German Higher Education, 1864–1914* (Stanford, CA, 2003), 1, 6ff.
Born in 1892 near Hanover, Erwin Panofsky spent the majority of his youth in Berlin, where he attended the prestigious Joachimsthalische Gymnasium. Pan initially studied law to please his father but quickly abandoned the financial security of that profession for the emerging field of art history. Like an increasing number of German-Jewish businessmen’s sons such as Warburg, Pan chose to shift his evaluation of authenticity, appraisal, and close observation from moneylending to art—a decision that would contribute immensely to the development of a new field. At the University of Freiburg, Pan studied with Wilhelm Vöge, who first introduced him to the German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer. After a brief detour in Munich, in 1915 he enrolled in the medievalist Adolf Goldschmidt’s art history seminar in Berlin. Also a Jewish banker-cum-scholar, Goldschmidt had arrived there only a couple of years earlier to fill the position formerly held by the art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, whose formalist approach he devoted much energy to undermining in his students. Influenced by Vöge and Goldschmidt, Pan would develop a lifelong interest in the Middle Ages and Renaissance as the subjects for a new epistemological foundation of art history.

When Pan and Dora met in Goldschmidt’s seminar, Dora was not only over thirty but also seven years her suitor’s senior, a fact that did not go unnoticed by the other students. Their early correspondence overflows with references to Bach concertos, the Romantic novelist Jean Paul, and German aesthetics, revealing a courtship in which ideas and passion were intimately connected. It also signaled the dangers of a relationship in which two aspiring academics who relied on each other’s unconditional admiration were also competing for recognition, a conflict that Pan pensively observed was derived from a dialectical tension “between egoism and altruism.” But this power dynamic was far from straightforward. As a confident and university-educated woman from a prominent German-Jewish family, Dora Mosse and her pedigree would have been immensely attractive to Erwin Panofsky, whose upper-Silesian father

54 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, August 8, 1915, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:24 (EJL).
and Hanoverian mother came from families of a modest status that did not compare to the Mosse family’s panache. Pan was aware of such social distinctions and referred fallaciously, on occasion, to his family’s noble lineage, while in private company he engaged in self-ridicule.55 Doubtless Pan derived some measure of legitimization from Dora’s family, whose admiration he sought by composing poems for them in Latin.56 Judge Mosse for his part teased Pan that his military service must not be too strenuous if he had time to compose Latin verse; not surprisingly, he urged his son-in-law to consider his financial security when making future career plans.57

Fortunately, Pan would not have to wait long for an offer. Having impressed Warburg and the curator of the Kunsthalle, Gustav Pauli, on a visit to Hamburg in 1915, Pan was invited at the young age of twenty-eight to receive his Habilitation from the University of Hamburg and to develop an art history department at the new university.58 In a letter to his wife of July 2, 1920, on the evening before his Habilitation exam, Pan shared his enthusiasm for this new opportunity. Dating the letter “Erew Jom Hacolloquium” (the evening before the colloquium), Pan combined the Hebrew phrase with the German scholarly event and irreverently linked the two traditions, a witticism that only his erudite German-Jewish wife would have understood.59 Despite his frustration with his junior position (Privatdozent) rather than full professorship (Ordinarius), Pan would effectively become the de facto director of the budding department.

Founded only two years previously, the University of Hamburg offered a unique institutional environment for intellectual life. Consolidating a number of scholarly institutes already in existence for several years, the university drew its energy from its base rather than from the top down.60 Moreover, the university embodied a democratic spirit that corresponded with its founding moment, the “Dreamland of the Armistice,” and promised new possibilities

56 Albert Mosse to Dora and Erwin Panofsky, June 23, 1917, Leo Baeck Institute (LBI), in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:50.
57 Albert Mosse to Dora and Erwin Panofsky, June 23, 1917, LBI, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:50; Albert Mosse to Dora and Erwin Panofsky, October 30, 1920, LBI, in ibid., 85.
58 Erwin Panofsky to Aby Warburg, November 9, 1915, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:28–29; Erwin Panofsky to Aby Warburg, December 8, 1915, in ibid., 32; Erwin Panofsky to Aby Warburg, December 18, 1925, in ibid., 34.
59 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, July 2, 1920, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:74 (EJL).
for such “outsiders” as the working class, Jews, and women. But for women of Dora’s generation, it remained difficult to take advantage of these new academic opportunities, and they often found themselves with two options: they could channel their intellectual interests to become their husband’s editors; or they could choose to pursue their own careers and remain, inevitably, in the professional shadows of their husbands.61

Dora was determined to avoid this unattractive fate. Though she abandoned her studies after all when she married her classmate and gave birth to two children, Hans and Wolfgang, Dora nonetheless rejected the traditional responsibilities of motherhood and homemaking: she hired a housekeeper to cook and to assist in child rearing.62 Moreover, she insisted on nonconformity even in her preferred style of dress, opting for an extremely short haircut, suits, ties, and even wingtip shoes, an aggressive ensemble that went beyond the masculine-inspired dress popularized by Dietrich and Bergman in the interwar period. That Dora’s given name was Jacob only reinforced this provocation, a fact made altogether stranger by the gendered pronouns of the German language that dictated that her husband refer to Dora in correspondence as “him.”63

This gender ambiguity extended to Hamburg’s network of relationships in the scholarly world where picnics, festivals, and private parties provided essential sites of intellectual life. A photograph from the 1920s depicting Pan with a group of students in a Hamburg park reveals Dora with her signature haircut and dress. According to Heckscher, Dora attended many of these events, even those evenings that ended in St. Pauli, Hamburg’s red-light district. Here, she found perhaps her only conversational outlet in philosophizing with the prostitutes.64 Isolated in these group settings, Dora fostered close lifelong relationships with Pan’s mentors, Vöge and Goldschmidt, them-


62 Soon after arriving in Princeton, New Jersey, Dora hired Emma Epps, a former caterer, as her housekeeper. Epps remembers Dora telling her that her Hamburg housekeeper, Bertha Ziegenhagen, held complete control of the household. She recalled when Dora appeared at her door and said in halting English, “I have two sons and do not know anything about children, housework and cooking, and I am not interested in such matters. You must come to my house and take charge.” As told to Norma B. Turner, “Dora Panofsky: A Journey to Find Her Own Voice,” 5–6, Heckscher Archiv 20, 1991, Warburg-Archiv, Hamburg.

63 In this way, Pan would often write “Euer Mutti,” employing the masculine pronoun even when referring to mother. See, e.g., Dora Panofsky and Erwin Panofsky to Hans Panofsky and Nancy Panofsky, July 22, 1943, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 2:907.

64 Sally Roberts, “Aspects of the Scholarly Writing of Dora Panofsky (1885–1965)” (draft for an article, which draws primarily on conversations with scholars, and to my knowledge was never published). The citation comes from a letter from William S.
selves unmarried, likely homosexual, and, therefore, outside this solidifying
gendered economy of scholarship.\textsuperscript{65} Though the personal was intimately
intertwined with scholarship, the process of professionalization required a
simultaneous distancing from this private life.

This contradictory relationship between ideas and their preconditions was
already evident in the Warburg Library, which uniquely developed from a
private book collection to the public forum for the university’s art history
department. At first glance the Warburg Library would seem to have been a
good place to be a female scholar. The development of the library occurred
slowly and from the bottom up in a way similar to that of Hamburg’s
university. As a homegrown enterprise that only acquired institutional and
municipal recognition post facto, the Warburg Library might have translated
into possibilities for female advancement, as had such early scientific fields as
ornithology and botany, which were organized around a court tradition rather
than a professional guild.\textsuperscript{66} It was precisely this perceived admission of
amateurs for which Dora was initially grateful. “That you also grant entry to
the non-professionals (Nicht-Fachleute) to your workshop,” Dora wrote to
Warburg on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, “I thank you especially.”\textsuperscript{67}

Yet Dora’s gratitude turned out to be a bit premature. The Warburg Library
officially opened in 1926 in the building adjacent to the family home that Aby
Warburg and his wife, the painter Mary Warburg, shared. And despite her
status as a trained art historian, Dora was ultimately denied the opportunity to
play an official role in the Warburg Library. This exclusion is all the more
distressing because, like the Annales School to which it has been on occasion
compared, the Warburg Library’s devotion to expanding the traditional po-
litical focus of history to include a wider range of social forces has historically

\textsuperscript{65} Dora, on occasion, even purchased neckties for Goldschmidt. Dora Panofsky to
Adolf Goldschmidt, December 18, 1939, in Panofsky, \textit{Korrespondenz}, 2:234; Vöge,
with whom Dora corresponded into the 1950s, expressed that they always shared a
special connection. Wilhelm Vöge to Dora Panofsky, January 3, 1948, in Panofsky,
\textit{Korrespondenz}, 2:902. See also Kathryn Brush, \textit{The Shaping of Art History: Wilhelm

\textsuperscript{66} As long as science was part of polite society and not yet professionalized, women
were cultivated as good consumers of scientific knowledge. Ann B. Schteir, \textit{Cultivating
Women, Cultivating Science: Flora’s Daughter’s Daughters and Botany in Eng-
Women in the Origins of Modern Science} (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 241. See also
Abir-Am and Outram, \textit{Uneasy Careers}, 7; and Daston and Galison, \textit{Objectivity}, 89.

\textsuperscript{67} Dora Panofsky to Aby Warburg, June 11, 1926, General Correspondence (GC),
Warburg Institute Archive, London (WIA); EJL.
provided much inspiration for feminist historians. However, a parasitic relationship between the private life and ideas developed instead. Family played an undeniable role in the structural organization of the Warburg Library, which, after all, emerged from a childhood bargain struck between brothers and was, in turn, financed by the family business, M. M. Warburg & Co. According to legend, thirteen-year-old Aby Warburg relinquished his birthright in the family inheritance in exchange for twelve-year-old Max Warburg’s agreement to buy his brother’s books for the rest of his life. At its height a collection of nearly 60,000 volumes, the library remained supported by this deal—according to Max Warburg, the “largest blank check I ever wrote.” Under Max Warburg’s tutelage, the bank achieved international prestige in the last decade of the nineteenth century, aided in large part by strategic marriages to international financial families.

Moreover, this private history came to have a real impact on the ideas of the library’s scholars. As Max Warburg predicted, the library’s economic independence from the city proved critical to its institutional success, for it was not “exposed to the dangers of a state administrative body.” At the height of the German inflation in 1923 when the state’s funds were limited, the Warburg Library sustained its collection with the support of the American brothers, Paul and Fritz. Whereas state-sponsored institutes remained at the mercy of local bureaucracies and politics, the Warburg Library enjoyed an unparalleled degree of cultural autonomy. Indeed its condition as a privately funded, extra-university enterprise made it an ideal place for Jews. Many of the

68 Needless to say, those who promote broad-based social history can still be sexist, while traditional political historians can be inclusive of women. Nonetheless, it is notable that the tradition of “high amateurism” that Smith describes suited such feminist historians as Lucy Maynard Salmon who investigated a much fuller social panorama (Smith, The Gender of History, 157–70).


70 Max Warburg to Aby Warburg, October 21, 1926, Family Correspondence (FC), WIA (EJL).

71 In America, Paul Warburg helped to create the Federal Reserve and Fritz Warburg became the chairman of the American Joint Distribution Committee. Toni Cassirer, Mein Leben mit Ernst Cassirer (Hildesheim, 1981), 127.

72 Members of the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt also viewed this autonomy as integral to the ability to pursue scholarship independent from state interest. Friedrich Pollock, “Das Institut für Sozialforschung an der Universität Frankfurt am Main,” in Forschungsinstitute: Ihre Geschichte, Organization und Ziele, ed. Ludolph Brauer et al. (Liechtenstein, 1980), 2:347. In contrast, the Bauhaus school, which was dependent on the state of Thuringia for funding, was run out of Weimar in
scholars who gathered at the library in the interwar period followed a long
tradition of German Jews’ seeking refuge in private institutes of scholarship
when state institutions were still closed to them.73

But the move from private book collection to institutionalized intellectual
space was less good for women. Before the institutionalization of the library
(and the university), women’s involvement in cultural affairs was part of a
long Hanseatic civic tradition. Through social networking, letter writing, and
hosting salons, the matriarchs of Hamburg’s bourgeois families, including the
Warburgs, actively participated in the intellectual life of eighteenth-century
Hamburg.74 Following the institutionalization of the library—a move captured
by the physical extension of the library from the private Warburg home into
the adjacent building—the role of women in the library became a particularly
charged affair. While Warburg presented his work to the “mixed company” of
his family, he complained of giving up seats at his lectures to “young girls”
and scoffed at the balcony full of women in Hamburg’s Planetarium as a
“nunnery.”75 Most important, the library’s unique transition from private to
public space created a gendered division of labor that was crucial to the
success of its methodological approach: iconology.

At a time when the nascent field of art history was experiencing an identity
crisis, according to the art historian H. W. Janson who studied under Pan in
Hamburg, the Warburg circle offered a middle ground between Heinrich
Wölfflin’s formalism and Alois Riegl’s psychological approach, which em-
phasized Kunstwollen.76 This “third way,” promoted by Warburg as early as
1912 as iconology, appealed to Pan, who was looking for a model for his
epistemological overhaul of the field.77 At its best, the iconology that Warburg

1925 following an unfavorable change in government. Barbara Miller Lane, Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918–1945 (Cambridge, MA, 1968), 69, 84–86.

73 Shulamit Volkov argues that the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institut, which was founded in
1910, became a haven for Jewish professors whose entrance into the university was
refused (Die Juden in Deutschland 1780–1918, Enzyklopädie Deutscher Geschichte
[Munich, 1994], 55). Whether Warburg would have preferred to have held a university
post is a matter of some contention. He had expressed an early interest in a position at
the University of Basel, where he could have worked alongside his intellectual role
model, the cultural historian Jacob Burckhardt. But antisemitic sentiments blocked
Warburg’s appointment (Aby Warburg to Wilhelm Vöge, September 16, 1910, GC,
WIA).

74 Tamara Zwick, “Correspondence between Public and Private: German Women,
Kinship, and Class in 19th-Century Hamburg” (PhD diss., University of California,
Los Angeles, 2005), esp. 148–78.

75 Warburg, Bing, and Saxl, Tagebuch, 328, 331 (EJL).

76 H. W. Janson, “Erwin Panofsky,” in Biographical Memoirs in American Philo-

77 Aby Warburg, “Italienische Kunst und Internationale Astrologie im Palazzo
and Pan promoted in the interwar period took into consideration the maker and the artwork, the content and the form, and different permutations of style to locate and decipher the meaning of changing motifs over time. Significantly, completion of this interdisciplinary work required the compilation of myriad sources, including photographs, artworks, and texts across vast periods of time. Although it was not necessary that this work be gendered, a separation emerged between the compiling of sources, on one hand, and the conceptualizing of that material, on the other. This division would not benefit men and women scholars equally.

To a certain degree Hamburg’s distinctive homegrown intellectual world persisted in both the library’s and the university’s institutional phases. The Panofskys often attended evening lectures together at the library and, on occasion, hosted the Warburgs in their home.\(^{78}\) In 1926, the same year that the Warburg Library officially opened and Pan was promoted to *Ordinarius*, Dora received permission from Warburg to take on the project of compiling the library’s general index of art.\(^{79}\) She had been working on the index on and off for two years when Warburg finally addressed the proper method of payment for her services. Later dissatisfied with Dora’s progress, Warburg asked his library assistant, Gertrud Bing, to end Dora’s involvement in the project. In response to Warburg’s request, Bing wrote on February 3, 1928: “Mrs. Panofsky was very sad, but naturally aborted the Index project. Under no circumstances does she want to take monetary compensation for the work already accomplished. Should one insist on it? I would be in favor of delighting her with books and friendly words, which would certainly be her preference.”\(^{80}\)

That Warburg sent Bing to do his bidding further reflected the gendered division of labor from which he benefited immensely. The building that had previously housed Mary Warburg as a caretaker and mother, along with the scholarly efforts of her husband, now divided these tasks into two parts: the Warburgs’ private home at 114 Heilwigstrasse remained the stage for her role as wife and mother, and the new Warburg Library at 116 Heilwigstrasse

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770 Levine

770 Levine

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79 Ibid., 20.

80 Ibid., 216 (EJL).
became the center of her husband’s scholarly pursuits. (By one account, Mary’s desire to be rid of her husband and his books during the day may even have provided the impetus for this move.) With a studio of her own that literally spanned both worlds, her painting was no longer a mere hobby, yet not quite an independent career. Rather, the majority of her time was devoted to taming her husband’s nerves, no small task given Aby Warburg’s lifelong struggle with depression and mental illness.

At the same time, the Warburg Library’s masculine scholarly space truly welcomed only one woman: Gertrud Bing. If Mary Warburg was, in many respects, a typical example of a nineteenth-century bourgeois woman, then Gertrud Bing was a good example of an academic woman in the 1920s for whom ascent in the university system was nearly impossible. Though she proved her intellectual superiority with her interdisciplinary dissertation on Lessing and Leibniz that bridged literature and philosophy in true Warburgian style, Bing spent her life serving the men of the Warburg school, including her mentor, the philosopher Ernst Cassirer, as well as Saxl and Warburg himself. To a certain degree, Bing held a tremendous amount of responsibility. She was responsible for cataloging the books, managing the Studies published by the library, and organizing the lecture series. As an expert in the index of all the library’s publications, Bing was indispensable: without her, Warburg admitted he would not have been able to complete his work for his multimedia picture atlas. But Bing also embodied the gendered division of the library, where female scholars would be relegated to the “female” tasks of organizing, filing, and managing.

While this division was not unique to iconology, it is possible that the fear of feminization of the field made these divisions all the more important. On one hand, like Dora, Bing was “masculinized” in her formal address, which

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81 When the Warburgs moved into 114 Heilwigstrasse in 1904, Aby Warburg already possessed nearly nine thousand books and would expand the collection to fifteen thousand in under a decade. Spurred by a visit from a potential architect to the Warburg home in 1920, Mary Warburg gestured to him as if she were choking on books. As told to Sabina Ghandchi by Gerhard Langmaak, “Die Hamburger Künstlerin: Mary Warburg, geb. Hertz” (Magisterarbeit, Universität Hamburg, 1986), 13; see also Max Warburg, “Aby Warburg Anecdotes,” III.134.1.6, 1929, WIA.


83 Michels and Schoell-Glass argue that the motto of Bing’s life could have been “I serve” (Ich diene; “Die Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaftlerin,” 29).

84 Ibid., 30.

85 Aby Warburg to Toni Cassirer, March 6, 1929, GC, WIA.

86 This is certainly the case for botanical illustration, in which the woman helpmate becomes the “tool in the hand” for the male scientist (Daston and Galison, Objectivity, 89).
over the course of the library’s diary transitioned from “Fraulein Dr. Bing,” to “Bing,” “Bingia,” “Bingius,” and finally, “Kollegin Bing.” On the other, her role in Warburg’s life was also deeply personal, as she often dined with the family, traveled with Warburg alone, and possibly even engaged in a romantic relationship with him. Despite both her professionalization and her personal involvement, Bing was powerless to help Dora. Following Dora’s dismissal from the index, Bing suggested to Warburg that Dora be given responsibility for another project. Especially now that she had completed typing the dissertation of one of Pan’s students, Dora was looking for work. “I think that it is very important to her,” wrote Bing. But Warburg was unsympathetic and showed her a lack of respect similar to that he had for the “nuns” who attended his lectures: “When Mrs. Panofsky does something for [the library], either it is too detailed (and therefore takes years) or too superficial.” Aside for the exception he made for Bing, Warburg permitted only the occasional professorial wives (Professorenfrau) to participate in intellectual discussion, and he did not count Dora among them. For her part Dora appears not to have accommodated this gendered division of labor, a separation that would accompany Warburg to his deathbed.

Sadly, it is unlikely that Pan came to Dora’s defense. His research trips became longer and more frequent and further complicated the power dynamic between the couple. It is clear from their correspondence that Dora became increasingly jealous and nervous about Pan’s whereabouts and that his playful responses—“Yours truly (until now)”—did not alleviate those fears. It was no secret that Pan particularly enjoyed the company of his female students and engaged in a lurid affair with at least one, as revealed in letters to his student, Pia von Reutter (later Wilhelm). While in Paris in 1927, Pan was somewhat sympathetic—“How dreadful that you are stuck in gray Hamburg, I’m so

87 Michels and Schoell-Glass argue that this permitted Bing access to the library (“Gertrud Bing,” 33).
89 Warburg, Bing, and Saxl, Tagebuch, 216 (EJL).
90 Ibid., 482.
91 Heise, Persönliche Erinnerungen, 56.
92 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, March 25, 1925, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:169 (EJL).
93 Over the course of the 1920s, Panofsky met Pia for concerts, at the cinema, and, on one occasion, in Paris. The full extent of these letters, many of which are discussed below, is housed in the Warburg Haus in Hamburg but was excluded from Panofsky’s
sorry for you. But ‘rien a faire.’”94 He then went on to describe in detail the theaters and galleries that he and the Hamburg historian Percy Schramm enjoyed. Still it was a shame, Pan later remarked, that Dora was not present on these trips. If nothing else he certainly would have gotten more work done on his book (Bücherarbeit)!95 Notwithstanding his bachelor freedom, Pan proved less productive without his helpmate.

In 1931, Pan accepted a visiting professorship at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and traveled to New York for the semester, leaving his wife and sons behind in Hamburg. In their correspondence, Pan commented on the strength of their marriage despite the formidable distance and his continued dalliances, assuring Dora he would return to Hamburg “more married” (verheirateter) than before.96 In the meantime, Pan’s lengthy absences made Dora’s role in the gendered space of the Warburg Library more ambiguous. When a former student of Pan’s became Saxl’s assistant and assumed indexing responsibilities in the Warburg Library, Pan wrote to Dora, distressed about the falling-out that she had with Bing and Saxl as a result. “I can’t turn a blind eye to the situation from here,” Pan talked through the issue aloud. “(I can’t accept incidentally as right, why [the] woman is not able to sit in the reading room, once she is anyhow always in the library; and if she doesn’t get any extra money for it, and not at all stands in the limelight before the others) but I’m also not in the instant inclined . . . to break my head into pieces over this issue.”97 His distress, notwithstanding, Pan abandoned Dora to deal with the situation on her own.

It seems possible that Dora took advantage of her newfound freedom, though Pan remained in the dark. “What incidentally is the secret study that you are undertaking in the Warburg library?” he inquired.98 For the fruits of Dora’s labor to materialize required a new set of scholarly conditions. In April 1933 when Pan was still in New York, he received a cable notification of his dismissal that was sealed with “Cordial Easter Greetings, Western Union.”

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94 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, August 24, 1927, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:239 (EJL).
95 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, April 5, 1925, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:169 (EJL).
96 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, December 15, 1931, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:445 (EJL).
97 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, October 14, 1931, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:399 (EJL).
98 Erwin Panofsky to Dora Panofsky, December 15, 1931, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:443 (EJL).
“These greetings,” Pan liked to recall, “proved to be a good omen.”
America offered the opportunity for Pan to have a job, rather than be a “déserteur,” a situation that Pan felt was “undignified.” It also offered Dora an unexpected opportunity.

III. ECHO AND NARCISSUS IN PRINCETON

Art historians have acknowledged the divergence between the German and American faces of Erwin Panofsky’s scholarship. But the move from Hamburg to Princeton, where Pan was hired by the Institute for Advanced Study in 1935, also proved particularly transformative for Dora, who finally resumed her career as an art historian. Many wives of refugee scholars became “university-educated housewives,” but Dora’s experience would be vastly different. To be fair, the honorable abode (Ehrwohn) of Princeton University, as the Panofskys called their new home, was not in the throes of a golden feminist era. (It was also not immune to antisemitism, and it is crucial that Pan was hired by the privately funded institute rather than the university.) There existed only one female professor in the 1950s at Princeton, the archaeologist Hetty Goldman. Pan spoke fondly of the university as “the last Indian Reserve for gentlemen (because a gentleman is a gentleman only in a womanless atmosphere)” and of “Miss Goldman,” he observed, “[she] is the only gentleman here.” Nonetheless, this gentleman’s world, which included the leading scientists and literary giants of the postwar world, warmly accepted Dora. When she contracted an unknown and painful illness due to high blood pressure in the early 1940s, this coterie of scholars visited her bedside. One member of the Princeton community recounted, “She was unable to sleep, and her sole distraction was having someone read to her. A three-man shift was set up to provide the reading. It consisted of Dr. Panofsky, Dr. Albert Einstein, and Thomas Mann.”

100 Erwin Panofsky to Margaret Barr, April 16, 1933, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 1:591–92.
Yet it remains difficult to account for serious changes in the conditions of scholarship. After all, Dora might well have applied her meticulous skills to Princeton’s Index of Christian Art, a massive project to catalog medieval and Renaissance images on which she initially worked.\textsuperscript{105} According to the Panofskys’ American housekeeper Emma Epps, “Pan refused to consider her a proper scholar and preferred to relegate her achievements to a lesser category. It was their scholarly friends more than Erwin who acknowledged Dora’s scholarly contributions.”\textsuperscript{106} Perhaps Dora received affirmation from her star-studded book club, or from Goldschmidt and Vöge, with whom she continued to correspond. According to Heckscher, whose 1958 book \textit{Rembrandt’s Anatomy of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp} contained a dedication addressed to the Panofskys as a couple, Dora’s transition from silent collaborator to individual author could be explained by none other than a “miraculously gained self-reliance.”\textsuperscript{107} Here, unexpectedly in this “Indian Reserve for gentlemen,” Dora would emerge from the shadow of her husband to become a scholar in her own right. Analyzing this work in the context of their relationship reveals both the possibilities and constraints of these new scholarly conditions.

Dora Panofsky’s first publication, “The Textual Basis of the Utrecht Psalter Illustrations,” which appeared in \textit{Art Bulletin} in 1943, presented a continuation of the Warburg school of scholarship. It also reflected—and indeed was a product of—the gendered division of labor in the Warburg Library. Drawing on her studies in medieval art with Goldschmidt and her private tutoring in Hebrew, Dora evaluated the authenticity of the Utrecht Psalter, a ninth-century illuminated manuscript.\textsuperscript{108} The primary issue surrounding this text was whether the manuscript, which provided illustrations to accompany biblical psalms, presented a copy of an earlier work (and if so, of what kind), or whether it stood as an independent Carolingian original. Drawing on her unique skill set, including and not least important her years of indexing, Dora proved that certain iconographical features of the manuscript could only be explained by the presence of a Hebraicum such as St. Jerome’s later Bible translation, rather than the Gallican version. She illustrated this argument with an accompanying chart, showing that the author of the Utrecht Psalter often based the iconography on images from the Hebraicum, where these images proved more “naturalist” and “reasonable.” Ironically, her painstaking re-

\textsuperscript{105} Dora Panofsky to Gertrud Bing, October 22, 1934, in Panofsky, \textit{Korrespondenz}, 1:766.
\textsuperscript{106} As told to Turner, “Dora Panofsky: A Journey to Find Her Own Voice,” 19.
\textsuperscript{108} Dora Panofsky, “The Textual Basis of the Utrecht Psalter Illustrations,” \textit{Art Bulletin} 25 (1943): 50–58; Roberts speculates about the different source of her interest in the manuscript (“Aspects of the Scholarly Writing of Dora Panofsky,” 3).
search skills, previously “relegated to a lesser category,” proved to be the foundation of her own—at least first recognized—conceptual contribution. Dora’s innovation was frequently cited and doubtless significant for her husband’s work *Early Netherlandish Painting*, in which he argued that the Carolingian illuminated book manuscript maintained a distinct spatial illusionism that drew on an early Christian model, presumably St. Jerome. Despite his willingness to extend gratitude to the Warburg circle at large, however, he omitted mention of his wife’s work.

Over the next several years, Dora would also publish two additional independent articles on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century painters Nicolas Poussin and Antoine Watteau. Both the choice of scholarship and the themes developed reflect a similar contradiction: on one hand, Dora made a respected contribution to the field; on the other, the articles perpetuated highly gendered scholarly practices. In the first, her most revealing essay, Dora analyzed Poussin’s *Birth of Bacchus*, a painting on display in Harvard’s Fogg Museum of Art. Here she faced the question of why the artist, who had twice before painted scenes from Ovid’s tales, presented two different yet unrelated stories in one large portrait: on the far right, Narcissus and Echo were engaged in their myth of reflection, and in a different sequence Mercury touched the newborn Bacchus and gestured upward to the child’s father, Jupiter.

Dora’s preoccupation with Narcissus, the Greek hero whose love for his own reflection ultimately brings his downfall, provides a tempting comparison with the intensely masculine culture of scholarship. Her own empathy, perhaps unsurprisingly, lies with Narcissus’s counterpart, Echo, of whom she writes: “As an acoustic mirror, so to speak, unable to answer him except in his own words, the ‘inamorata infelice’ had made it no less impossible for him to escape from his ego than to escape from the optical mirror of the water. In Poussin’s group, self-love and self-negation are locked into one diagram of mutual extinction.” This is a telling metaphor indeed as Pan, like Warburg, was supported by a constant and rotating source of women who provided—in Virginia Woolf’s words—a “looking-glass” function, “that serves to explain in part the necessity that women so often are to men.” And scholars were no exception.

But the sole validation of his wife would not suffice. Pan’s letters to his

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student Pia Wilhelm, whom he called “Piissima” (ironically, “most pious,” in Italian), reveal a professor in constant need of a young student’s admiration. “I am very good to you, little Pia,” Pan wrote in the informal form of “you” (Du), “and very thankful for the excitement (am I permitted to say that?) of such an improper feeling, as the love from an old professor for his ‘pupil’ is.”

Pan was hardly the first or last professor in German academic history to use the power and intrigue of his academic position to earn the affection of a young female student. His relationship with Pia is illuminating, however, because this correspondence, which continued until the end of his life, reveals how closely his perceptions of himself as a man and a scholar were bound up in this relationship. As such, the connection that emerges from these letters between masculinity and intellectual virility serves as a structural principle for assessing the gendered practices of scholarship and corresponding work.

In later years, Pan shared with Pia his anxiety over growing old and its effects on his body and mind. In his correspondence with Pia from the postwar period, Pan addressed her as “dear Pia,” because “the address ‘Mrs. Wilhelm’ comes to me as too unaccustomed and you are no longer ‘Miss von Reuter.’” He employed the formal form of “you” (Sie) and signed the letter “Erwin Panofsky,” rather than “Pan.” In a subsequent letter, Pan asked Pia if she would send him a current photograph of her “‘because,’ as [Theodor] Fontane wrote to his wife, when he as an old man saw a young love again by accident, ‘one remains a sheep.’” The irony was cruel: as Pan joked in a sonnet he composed entitled “XLVI Love’s Flame Doth Feed on Age (Special for Grey Haired People),” it was precisely with age that love’s fire was the strongest: “If some mild heat of love in youth confessed / burns a fresh heart with swift consuming fire, / what will the force be of a flame more dire / shut up within an old man’s cindery breast?” Pan advised Pia not to send her work because he suffered from “old age, a cold, and a complete failure of ideas and labor.” He insisted, “I only doze here and would not have anything ingenious to

113 Erwin Panofsky to Pia von Reutter (Wilhelm), March 23, 1931, Box 189, 3, Warburg-Archiv (EJL).
114 Erwin Panofsky to Pia Wilhelm (née von Reutter), September 3, 1950, Box 159, 4, Warburg-Archiv (EJL).
115 Erwin Panofsky to Pia Wilhelm (née von Reutter), April 4, 1962, Box 159, 7, Warburg-Archiv (EJL).
116 Erwin Panofsky (“Michael Angelo”), “XLVI Love’s Flame Doth Feed on Age (Special for Grey Haired People),” Getty 37, undated, Warburg-Archiv. Pan expressed a similar frustration with respect to his son, explaining, on one occasion, that he felt like the “decrepit father” in Shakespeare’s thirty-seventh sonnet who “takes delight / To see his active child do deeds of youth” (Erwin Panofsky to Rita Hirschfeld, January 22, 1937, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 2:10).
add.”

Pan’s self-conscious deterioration as a man and scholar can be measured in this lengthy affair from his peak to his complete loss of effectiveness.

Pia wasn’t Pan’s only infatuation. Dora claimed to care more about her husband’s stinky dog than his womanizing, which was an extension of the 1920s bohemian intellectual scene in which the couple had participated. But Weimar’s sexual mores had their limits, and such liberal values could occasionally backfire. Despite her protests the tension between self-love and self-negation was doubtless personal for Dora; in her analysis of the Birth of Bacchus, she took this one step further. Here she argued that Poussin’s inclusion of the tale of Bacchus conveyed an additional tension between life and death, a tension that had important implications for the female scholar. Though a previous scholar had interpreted this contrast in themes as a natural antithesis between “fertility” and “sterility,” Dora seemed intent on excavating the “ideological structure” of this arrangement. In light of her resistance to the traditional roles of motherhood—she once observed that “pregnancy was ugly”—Dora’s insistence on the “psychological genius” of this contrapuntal composition is striking. This tension was evident in the public persona she presented as a mother and a scholar. Pan’s longtime secretary Roxanne Heckscher observed that one got a very warm feeling from the Panofsky boys and suspected that their mother must have been more affectionate with them than she let on. “To me it [her aversion to motherhood] was an attitude that she didn’t really hold,” Heckscher speculated, “It was holding her.” So The Birth of Bacchus depicted two scenes that further emphasized the explosive duality that imbued her whole existence.

Pan for his part remained focused neither on the relationship between life and death, nor the tension between fertility and sterility, but the balance between virtue and pleasure, a dilemma he dubbed the “choice of Hercules.” In advising the art historian Millard Meiss on the subject, he wrote, “You must do whatever you think is best for your work and your (and Mig’s) personal

117 Erwin Panofsky to Pia Wilhelm (née von Reutter), October 28, 1962, Box 159, 8, Warburg-Archiv (EJL).
119 Hannah Arendt expressed a similar hurt when her husband Heinrich Blücher had an affair with a young Jewish woman from their émigré intellectual circle in 1948; but she too was caught between her personal feelings and the Weimar social mores of their circle (Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, Hannah Arendt: For Love of the World [New Haven, CT, 2004], 240).
120 D. Panofsky, “Narcissus and Echo,” 117.
121 Ibid.
122 Smith, “A Secretary’s Recollections of Erwin Panofsky: Roxanne S. Heckscher.”
well-being, these two things being, of course, inextricably connected.”123 Yet despite his persistent identification with Hercules, Pan never actually felt compelled to sacrifice one or the other, while Dora’s scholarship, in contrast, seemed unable to escape the personal.124 Her subsequent and final single-authored article extended her interest in eighteenth-century art to examine the image of the iconic melancholy clown Pierrot in Watteau’s painting of the same period. Like Pierrot, Dora struggled with melancholy and bouts of depression, often castigating her sons for their lack of support.125 She was unsure whether people liked her for herself or for the fact that her husband was a renowned art historian. Though she composed poetry in the postwar period, at the age of fifty-five, in the presence of her housekeeper and friend Emma Epps, she burned nearly all of it, reflecting the tragedy of her unfulfilled ambition.126

Though it shouldn’t diminish Dora’s belated sojourn into art-historical scholarship, it is noteworthy that her scholarly contributions were highly gendered. Dora’s debut into the scholarly world—her commentary on the Utrecht Psalter—was facilitated by the only area in which she possibly had more training than her husband: Jewish texts. Yet while that article still represented a debt to Goldschmidt and was circumscribed by one-dimensional iconographic studies, her articles on Poussin and Watteau explored two eighteenth-century painters whose association with rococo has marked this period, both in content and analysis, as highly feminine.127 Despite Dora’s long-awaited entry to the field, then, her scholarship remained limited by her partnership. According to Pan’s former student and friend William Heckscher: “Dora and Pan were . . . a group-ego. The wonderful phenomenon was [Dora’s] ultimate liberation of which her publications were a marvelous fruit. Not that she turned away from her husband’s work and insight but she achieved things, formulated ideas, which may have been imitation but that

124 Erwin Panofsky, Hercules am Scheidewege: Und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst, introduction by Dieter Wuttke (Berlin, 1997). This scholarly connection was cemented by a humorous caricature drawn by the local Hamburg artist Anita Rée, archived in the Warburg Haus, Hamburg.
125 Dora Panofsky and Erwin Panofsky to Adele Panofsky and Wolfgang Panofsky, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 2:756.
126 Very little of it survives, and that which does is difficult to decipher (Dora Panofsky, untitled, 1961, Getty 44, Warburg-Archiv, Hamburg).
only in the best sense of the word.”¹²⁸ Still locked in a dialectical tension between “egoism and altruism,” Dora, like Echo, produced scholarship that was a mirror image of Pan’s.

IV. PANDORA, LOST AND REGAINED

The dialectical relationship between ideas and their outside forces culminated in the “group ego’s” publication of Pandora’s Box, a self-reflexive text that tells the story of the effacement of the sensual for the humanist tradition, even as it hints at the unavoidable influence of the private in intellectual life. This contradictory relationship was already reflected in the circumstances of publication. According to a letter Pan wrote to the editor at Bollingen, adapted for the book jacket of Pandora’s Box, Dora was present at Warburg’s seminar in the summer of 1925 and also conferred with him between 1924 and 1929.¹²⁹ With incomplete documentation of attendance or library usage, it is difficult to measure Dora’s participation. Yet, as I have argued, the structure of the Warburg Library and its male scholars precluded her playing either a substantial or an acknowledged role. Dora’s inflated curriculum vitae post facto, therefore, can only be understood as an attempt to rehabilitate her as a legitimate scholar for the purpose of this joint publication.

Despite efforts to professionalize Dora, however, she was assumed to be an amateur art historian, and Pandora’s Box was ultimately designated a private affair. According to the art historian E. H. Gombrich, the book resembled a “jeu d’esprit,” in which the couple subjected “their private impresa to public scrutiny.”¹³⁰ The literary scholar Henri Peyre echoed this judgment when he described the book as exhibiting “some impish pleasure . . . as a respite from more strenuous labors.”¹³¹ Another reviewer made the point even more clearly: “The presence of Mrs. Panofsky is felt throughout. The book is doubly learned, and its pace is fanciful and elegant.”¹³² Pan, too, either excessively justified the project or downplayed the work it required. “[Pandora’s Box] was ready for quite a long time,” he assured his colleague and “did not

interfere with my homework on the Gottesman [Foundation] lectures.”133 As a “specialist” asked to deliver a talk in the year following its publication, Pan declined and insisted he had no new scholarship; “our Pandora book . . . would not meet the bill.”134

The degradation of the private realm evident in the reception of the book was duplicated in its subject matter. Pandora’s Box traced the vicissitudes of Pandora from her Hellenic origins through her mysterious disappearance in the medieval era, her return in Judeo-Christian form, and finally her exclusion from secular humanism. As the Panofskys explained, the ancient tradition promoted two competing schools on the myth of Pandora. According to Hesiod’s version, Pandora opened a jug releasing all the evils in the world, whereas in Babrius’s reading, the jug contained many good things, which man forfeited out of his eagerness to know them; only hope was left. When Pandora reemerged in the fifteenth century following the reintroduction of Greek sources into the Western world, her story became fused with a separate tale of Jupiter’s box of gifts, and Pandora’s jug became a box. What’s more, Pandora was subsequently held responsible for bringing this box to earth—from which only Hesiod’s ills then emerged. The correct interpretation was not, according to Pan and Dora, “for art historians to decide.”135 Instead the couple wished to investigate why Pandora became famous on account of an attribute that was “neither a box nor properly hers,” a line of inquiry in which they took enormous pleasure and invited participation from their entire scholarly community.136

As a study on the relationship between icons and their origins, Pandora’s Box located its center of gravity around the question of this confusion, or fusion, of Pandora’s jug for a box, whose consequences were, as the Panofskys described, “quite out of proportion to its apparent insignificance.”137 The philological accident remained that much more inexplicable since its primary progenitor emerged as the Renaissance scholar Erasmus, who presented the first nonclassical version of the Pandora story and certainly “knew his languages,” conforming in every other respect to the pure Warburgian hero. This fusion made Pandora particularly susceptible to alteration by the church

133 Erwin Panofsky to Gregory Paulsson, April 3, 1956, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 3:936. On one occasion, Pan backtracked on the nickname, calling its relevance to the book “a pure coincidence.” Erwin Panofsky to Julius Held, June 26, 1953, in ibid., 455.
136 The Panofskys thank Ernst Kantorowicz, Henri Peyre, and Leo Spitzer for their contributions (Pandora’s Box, 145, 150).
137 Ibid., 14.
fathers, undoubtedly the most important transmitters of the Greek tradition and intrigued by Pandora’s box as complementary proof for original sin. By the onset of the sixteenth century, Pandora would be turned into a Greek version of Eve.

Pandora might have remained a symbol for the source of evil, but her association with original sin doomed her to extinction in the transition from the religious to the secular world. While the Judeo-Christian tradition viewed the source of evil as curiosity, the Socratic tradition, revived in the Renaissance, would come to see the source of evil as ignorance. As they illustrated with reference to Rosso Fiorentino’s frescoes painted in Francis I’s sixteenth-century court, the Pandora motif proved problematic for its challenge to the king’s desire for a narrative of reason with himself in control. “We can easily see that in this humanistic climate Ignorance won out over Pandora,” the Panofskys explained, “Pandora is, in spite of her Hellenic origin, a sister of Eve rather than aphrosyne [unreason].” Due to the emergence of secular humanism Pandora ultimately disappeared from the cultural conscience of the West, an argument that the art historians further explicated in their second and last collaborative work, “The Iconography of the Galerie François Ier at Fountainebleau.” The king’s galleries came to promote the maxim, “‘no man sins willingly’ that is to say, that evil does not, as both the story of The Fall of Man and the myth of Pandora would have us believe, result from a thirst for knowledge but from the lack of it.”

As a symbol of evil defined as curiosity, Pandora was forced to recede in a secular humanist’s world.

The real damage was done, then, not by Hesiod’s misogyny, nor by Erasmus’s philological mistake, but by the conscious repression of a narrative of personal entanglement in pursuit of the truth. To explain Pandora’s rise and fall the Panofskys found their primary mode of explanation in the contrasts they revealed between the preconditions of iconology and the icons themselves. Pandora would be excluded because of the effacement of the personal from secular humanism. Yet the Panofskys hinted that their own methodological approach would take the personal into account.

This suggestion is particularly evident in their epilogue to Goethe’s 1808 play, Pandora, and its unfinished pair, Pandorens Wiederkunft, which the Panofskys playfully translated as “Pandora Lost” and “Pandora Regained.” As their careful philological work revealed, Goethe’s interest in Pandora could not be wholly explained by his Neoplatonist context. Goethe scholarship had long acknowledged that the poet immortalized his half-reciprocated love for a young girl, Ulrike von Levetzow, in his 1823 collection, Trilogie der Leidenschaft (Trilogy of passion). But the Panofskys observed that this

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138 Ibid., 54.
strange attraction began as early as the summer of 1806 when, upon meeting the two-year-old, he nicknamed her “Pandora” and recorded her departure in his diary as “Pandora’s flight.” His play, *Pandora*, which appeared shortly thereafter, would subsequently reveal a somber awareness of dejection and old age, incidentally not all that unlike the feelings expressed by Pan in his correspondence to his former student lover Pia. Significantly, the play would also now feature as the central character Pandora’s human husband Epimetheus, not as a “stupid man who learns too late” but, rather, as a “grand and moving figure” who finds unique creative inspiration in the gift of Pandora’s box from the gods.

According to this reading, in line with Neoplatonism, Pandora symbolized the “disturbing influence of the senses,” which, nonetheless, “enables us to practice the arts and crafts.” That is, Pandora becomes the figure who facilitates the connection between the human and *geistlich*, that unique German combination of the spiritual and intellectual worlds. Moreover, Epimetheus is absolved for his attraction to Pandora, an attraction, which though ultimately destructive, represents a perennial human desire to have access to the divine. But it is not without sadness that the Panofskys conclude the epilogue with a recognition of this relationship between ideas and their outside forces, for this story “show[s] that even the greatest of mortals is not like God, who created something out of nothing, but has to ‘manipulate some material that existed before.’” However regretfully, humans’ ideas will always have a source and origin outside the realm of pure thought. By revealing Goethe’s real “Pandora” to be not a divine creation but his unrequited love for a young girl, the Panofskys emphasized that those origins could even sometimes be quite sordid. We may efface this base explanation in favor of mythology, but it is the iconologist’s (and indeed historian’s) task to promise (or threaten) its return.

V. CONCLUSION

In June 1958, Pan received a strange request: the sexologist Albert Ellis was planning a new volume for the *Encyclopedia of Sexual Behavior* and inquired whether Pan would be willing to contribute an entry on the subject of “Sex in Art.” Lacking the expertise but not his characteristic dry wit, Pan declined: “I am sorry to say that, while I can lay a modest claim to expert knowledge in the field of art this does not apply to the field of sex, and certainly not to both

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140 Panofsky and Panofsky, *Pandora’s Box*, 124.
141 Ibid., 126.
142 Ibid., 132.
143 Ibid., 136.
fields in combination.” Despite Pan’s ingenuous reply, however, Pandora’s Box seemed to accomplish precisely that. Not only did the pair take as their subject matter the emergence of the box qua female womb in Greek myth and the box’s subsequent repression by secular humanists, but they also suggested that iconological research needed to take the sensual into account to fully excavate the origins of icons and ideas.

Yet, as we have seen, it was precisely the private nature of the scholarly subject matter as well as the participation of Dora in the project that created such confusion in the reception of the book. PanDora’s project to trace the vicissitudes of an icon in its various permutations over time remained squarely in the tradition of Warburgian iconology. But when Pan engaged in iconological research alone his efforts were praised as erudition, while Dora’s efforts toward the same task were demeaned as mere indexing. As a result, certain assumptions were made about the nature of their collaboration. According to one friend, Dora gathered the scholarly material, and Panofsky put it in order. At the end of her life, she was justly celebrated in a volume of essays devoted to her husband as a “scholar who from time to time has been a collaborator of Panofsky.” Indeed PanDora’s story reveals a common gendered structure that operates at the root of much scholarship. Evident in fields such as statistics, botany, and ornithology, which originally benefited from the strong participation of women, a division ultimately emerged between classification, sorting, and counting, on one hand, and “real” conceptual work, on the other.

Perhaps because of the fluidity between these tasks—menial and conceptual—required for iconological research, these boundaries became all the more important. Pan was understandably grateful to the director of the Princeton Index of Christian Art, Rosalie B. Green, who often provided him with invaluable iconographical information about the Middle Ages. Yet his gratitude did not prevent him from condescending to the feminine activity of filing. According to Heckscher, “in reference to the tireless labors of the exclusively female staff of the Princeton Index,” Panofsky offered the following adaptation

144 Erwin Panofsky to Albert Ellis, June 6, 1958, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 4:274.
147 Adam Tooze, Statistics and the German State, 1900–1945 (Cambridge, 2001), 26–27. Although, as Tooze reminds us, women were the original “computers,” these women have only in the last decade received acknowledgment for this role. See, in particular, Jennifer S. Light, “When Computers Were Women,” Technology and Culture 40 (1999): 455–83.
from Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, “Parturient mures, nascitur ridiculus mons.” Altering Horace’s original Latin—“Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus” (The mountains shall be in labor, and a ridiculous mouse will be brought forth)—Pan evoked the original meaning of this ironic line about the futility of literary excess, but now, rather than the mountain, the mice—standing in for the female librarians—were about to be in labor. And their output would be the mountain—no longer *montes* but here *mons*, a large—and recognizably feminine—heap, whose sexual undertones could hardly be ignored. Just as Horace relied on the literary technique of his epic predecessors even as he dismissed them, Pan, too, wiped out the memory of the birthing process of his scholarly output (including perhaps that done by his wife), to elevate its public reception. In this way, Pan’s own life seemed to fall prey to exactly the repression that *Pandora’s Box* allegorized.

The publication of *Pandora’s Box* notwithstanding, only on the rarest of occasions did Pan acknowledge this reality. In the work for which he is probably most known, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, Pan unexpectedly includes an unlikely scene from the drama of a painter’s private life. “Agnes Frey thought she was marrying a painter in the late medieval sense,” Panofsky observed, “an honest craftsman who produced pictures as a tailor made coats and suits; but to her misfortune her husband discovered that art was both a divine gift and an intellectual achievement requiring humanistic learning, a knowledge of mathematics and the general attainments of a ‘liberal culture.’” Yet this strange digression on Dürer’s marital woes in this famous tome on the sixteenth-century old master seems to be the exception that proves the rule: the private life remains incompatible with the world of ideas. That Pan continued to view himself as the unappreciated genius was clear. The difference is that Dora, unlike Agnes, did not so much resent the world of humanists as she wanted to participate, too; this unfulfilled desire provided the source of Dora’s double tragedy.

Whether other women or couples escaped this fate depended largely on the time and place in which they found themselves. Historians can always find exceptions, such as the British classicist Jane Harrison, whom the Panofskys cited as responsible for identifying Hesiod as the source of misogyny. But Harrison maintained her autonomy only by avoiding marriage altogether. Moreover, as the case of the “exception woman” par excellence, Hannah Arendt, underscores, even shunning the private sphere does not preclude

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others from assuming that a woman’s personal life is intimately related to her scholarship. In the realm of art history, Erica Tietze-Conrat and Hans Tietze and the architectural historians Richard Krautheimer and Trude Krautheimer-Hess certainly succeeded at producing work over a longer period of time that was explicitly collaborative, even while each individual scholar maintained an independent career. But the reception of the Krautheimers would ultimately not be all that different from that of PanDora. While reviewers acknowledged Krautheimer-Hess’s participation in the pair’s collaboration, they nonetheless still assumed that she did the indexing and her husband did the compiling. Even these exceptions, therefore, would seem to suggest that we maintain different assumptions about the relationship between the private lives of male and female scholars and their ideas.

Needless to say, families—and indeed marriages—vary across time, and substantially more research is required to pursue this line of argumentation further, most notably among same-sex scholar pairs. Any hope for recovering this lost private history must be tempered by the obstacles discussed above, not the least of which is that scholars are not privy to what happens in private. Whether PanDora’s collaboration predated the publication of Pandora’s Box remains a seductive albeit open question. It is quite possible that the true source of Pan’s creative output was a constant source of dynamic dinner conversation with his wife. Pan would go on to develop their collective ideas on Bacchus and Erigone for a single-authored essay, A Mythological Painting by Poussin in the National Museum in Stockholm, without crediting his

151 Arendt has achieved some notoriety as a female scholar who, nonetheless, derided the private sphere. “To live an entirely private life means above all to be deprived of things essential to a truly human life” (The Human Condition [Chicago, 1958], 53–54).

152 Freidenreich, Female, Jewish, and Educated, 125. Michels also argues that the work relationship between the Tietzes was fundamentally different from that of the Panofskys (“Kunstgeschichte, paarweise,” 39).

153 Richard Krautheimer is listed repeatedly as “the author,” “to whose side stood Trude Krautheimer-Hess who saw to the comprehensive appendix” (Erich Steingräber, review of Lorenzo Ghiberti, by Richard Krautheimer and Trude Krautheimer Hess, Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte 21 [1958]: 271; EJL). Pan, for his part, often addressed Erica Tietze-Conrat in her scholarly queries as “Mrs. Tietze,” ignoring both her maiden name and scholarly title. See, e.g., Erwin Panofsky to Erica Tietze-Conrat, June 5, 1956, in Panofsky, Korrespondenz, 3:987.

154 Though she doesn’t focus exclusively on lesbian couples, this is in part the goal of Sharon Marcus, whose work shows how relationships between women are also governed by and govern the institution of marriage (Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England [Princeton, NJ, 2007]). In the realm of art history, another intriguing example would be Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit’s Caravaggio’s Secrets (Cambridge, MA, 1998), a work that moves beyond traditional interpretation of the homoerotic message in Caravaggio’s paintings to suggest a new notion of connectedness.
wife. But the full extent of PanDora’s collaboration eludes our complete comprehension. My argument is that such inquiries would benefit from shifting focus from recovering a lost female voice to treating the family—as I have done here with a marriage—as a legitimate site of scholarly practice with significant epistemological consequences for the field.

The households and intimate scholarly practices of PanDora complicate as much as they clarify. That Dora was shut out of a private institute of scholarship where we might have expected her inclusion due to its nontraditional setting and socially expansive methodology is surprising. Moreover, that she blossomed at Princeton, an institution not known for its acceptance of women in that era, suggests that the conditions for the possibility of knowledge must also include other personal and intellectual factors as well. My suggestion is not that there exists a one-to-one relationship between the private life and ideas. Following as a guide the promising new literature in the “private history of ideas” discussed above, the challenge remains how to access this private life without lapsing into reductive analyses that abandon the distinctiveness of both texts and their contexts. As the Panofskys argue, Goethe’s *Pandora* cannot be completely understood any more by a pure Neoplatonist interpretation than it can be “explained away” by his infatuation with a young girl. As self-reflective historians it behooves us to account for all that is lost in the epistemological story that ignores scholarly behaviors and practices of the intimate world.

PanDora symbolizes the collective preconditions—often disparaged but always necessary—that enable the production of scholarship. *Pandora* tells the story of the effacement of the sensual for the ultimate promotion of secular humanism. This dual story—at once biographical and epistemological—underscores the possibilities and pitfalls of a line of research that aspires to expand the circle of explanation for the analysis of ideas. Needless to say (but irresistibly so), it emphasizes the “Pandora’s box” that is opened when one attempts to do so.

155 “Dora has now taken a serious interest in your so-called ‘Bacchus and Erigone’ which we discussed so often when I was in Sweden, and . . . I try to help her along” (Erwin Panofsky to Carl Nordenfalk, October 12, 1955, in Panofsky, *Korrespondenz*, 4:816–17); Erwin Panofsky, *A Mythological Painting by Poussin in the National Museum Stockholm* (Stockholm, 1960). The essay is dedicated to Adolf Goldschmidt and makes no mention of Dora.

156 Randolf makes a similar argument with respect to his study of the Bakunin sisters in relationship to Russian Hegelianism (*The House in the Garden*, 14–15).