To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Michelle L. Webster entitled “Sexuality, Gender and Identity in Selected Works of Arthur Schnitzler.” I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in German.

Stefanie Ohnesorg, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Carolyn R. Hodges

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Carolyn R. Hodges
Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

SEXUALITY, GENDER AND IDENTITY IN SELECTED WORKS OF ARTHUR SCHNITZLER

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate Arthur Schnitzler's depiction of three female figures in short stories with a specific focus on how the figures are portrayed in relation to socially sanctioned roles in late nineteenth and early twentieth century German-speaking Europe. The figures and works selected as subjects of this study were Friederike in *Die Frau des Weisen* (1898), Elise in *Der Mörder* (1921) and Else in *Fräulein Else* (1924). The primary question that was investigated was whether Schnitzler depicted these female figures in a manner that could be interpreted as impacting the loosening of the grip of such expectations on women. As an approach, passages in the text that mirror expectations placed on women by society in this era were sought out and analyzed. Prior to the analysis of the three figures, information on the major trends of such expectations was identified through selected passages in Hedwig Dohm's *Der Frauen Natur und Recht* (1876). Results of the study demonstrated that Schnitzler often depicted these figures in a manner resembling the views of sanctioned roles as expressed by Dohm. While Schnitzler did not portray the figures as specifically breaking out of such roles, he appeared to make a statement regarding the toxicity level in his society for women as a result of the roles that were imposed upon them. Additional findings were that Schnitzler's boldness in his depiction of the figures seemed to increase over time and that many observations that critics have made about his dramas could also be said of these works of prose.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Born in 1862 as the son of a prominent Jewish laryngologist, Arthur Schnitzler continued to call Vienna his home until his death in 1931. As a member of the upper echelon of the bourgeoisie, Schnitzler often attended the Burgtheater as he was growing up. He was also frequently introduced to actors and singers who were patients of his father.[1] It was likely during this early exposure to the theatrical world that the seeds of passion for writing were sown in a young Schnitzler. His prose and plays, in combination with his letter exchanges and personal diaries, offer a unique, detailed journey not only into Schnitzler's own life, but also into his perspective of the world that was *fin de siècle* Vienna. His works spanned a critical period that realized significant political changes, yet his writing focuses primarily on social issues of his characters and often displays Schnitzler's interest in the human psyche and psychoanalysis. Schnitzler's protagonists come not only from the upper bourgeoisie, as did he, but from various social classes. More often than not his works are set in *fin de siècle* Vienna.

During his productive period Schnitzler experienced notable success and popularity as well as harsh criticism, both for his prose and dramatic works. Schnitzler's plays made him quite well known in the German speaking world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The content of Schnitzler's works was often controversial, addressing death, suicide, eroticism, or female sexuality. It would be fair to say that, in his works, Arthur Schnitzler boldly and openly confronted themes that were considered taboos of contemporary Viennese society, things that—one may assume—many people

[1] For biographical information see Wagner, 1981.

thought about or engaged in, but dared not discuss. Because of this, his works offer important insights into Viennese and furthermore Western European socio-cultural discourses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and have spurred quite an extensive corpus of criticism, to which contributions continue today.

Schnitzler's dramas constitute a significant portion of his oeuvre and contributed significantly to the acclaim he received during his lifetime. Even today Arthur Schnitzler is perhaps more widely known, particularly in the United States, for dramatic performances of his works than for his narratives (Wisely 2).[2] In her 2003 essay on Schnitzler's dramatic works Elizabeth G. Ametsbichler addresses the appeal of Schnitzler's dramas and his relevance in German literature both during his lifetime and in the twenty-first century:

> Schnitzler's contemporaries were content to assess him as a controversial chronicler of their own times, the observer of a soon-to-be archaic world. Now, entering a new millennium, scholars are reassessing Schnitzler's life, his works, and his influence, all of which are interwoven. His appeal to the world of theater endures because of the wide range of provocative issues that his works cover – in direct contradiction to the often-perpetuated view that his dramas had become passé even while he was still alive. His medley of themes clearly demonstrates Schnitzler's artistic creativity as well as his medical, scientific training. Both his clinical eye and his literary talent enabled him to capture the essence of human nature and the confused condition of the human soul in his works, which ultimately represent a dramatic analysis of society (200).

Ametsbichler examines selected plays and their reception, focusing on the intrigue and fascination that Schnitzler evoked through his writing. More recently, Richard Urbach examines in an essay Schnitzler's early plays, particularly *Anatol* (1893), with the aim of identifying the influence of French dramatist Victorien Sardou on European theater.

[2] Among the stage and film adaptations of Schnitzler's works written in English in the last 30 years are Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), a film adaptation of *Traumnovelle* (1926), Tom Stoppard's *Undiscovered Country* (1979) and *Dalliance* (1986), stage adaptations of *Das weite Land* and *Liebelei*, respectively, and Jonathan Banks' adaptation of *Das weite Land*, *Far and Wide* (2003).

Among the criticism that focuses on the performance of Schnitzler's dramas is Renate Wagner and Brigitte Vacha's *Wiener Schnitzler-Aufführungen 1891-1970*, a work that chronicles the performances of Schnitzler's dramas in Vienna while bringing to light his deep reticulation with the city.[3] In their introduction Wagner and Vacha go as far as to say "[E]s gibt außer Nestroy keinen anderen Dichter, dessen Name so selbstverständlich mit dem Begriff ›Wien‹ verbunden wird wie der Arthur Schnitzlers" (9). More recently, Evelyn Deutsch-Schreiner examines the phases of the reception of Schnitzler's dramas, particularly in Austria, beginning with the post World War II years and concentrating on the 1950s and 1960s. She concludes her essay by stating, "[I]n the last two decades of the twentieth century, his work conquered the international and Austrian stages" (72).

In an examination of Schnitzler's dramas alongside those of a Schnitzler contemporary, W. E. Yates, in his book *Schnitzler, Hofmannsthal, and the Austrian Theatre*, focuses on key works by Schnitzler and Hugo von Hofmannsthal that Yates views "connect with some of the principal issues of the time such as Anti-Semitism, double standards in the relations between the sexes, and the First World War and its aftermath" (viii). Of Schnitzler's dramas, Yates focuses on *Anatol* (1892), *Liebelei* (1895), *Reigen* (1903), *Das weite Land* (1911), and *Professor Bernhardi* (1912) and of Hofmannsthal's he examines *Elektra* (1911), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911), *Der Schwierige* (1921), *Das Salzburger große Welttheater* (1922), and *Der Unbestechliche* (1923). Yates suggests that both Schnitzler's and Hofmannsthal's writing for the theater as well as the

[3] Based on Wagner's 1968 dissertation, "Wiener Schnitzler-Aufführungen 1891 – 1968" and Vacha's 1966 dissertation, "Arthur Schnitzler und das Wiener Burgtheater 1895 – 1965."

critical reception of their dramas "reflect the shifting climate of cultural and intellectual life in Austria (particularly Vienna) from the *fin de siècle* to the brink of Austro-Fascism" (viii). Although Yates' focus differs from Wagner and Vacha's, both works are significant contributions, not only to the criticism on Schnitzler's dramas, but also to the reader's understanding of the climate of the Vienna in which Schnitzler lived and wrote and of the complexity of Schnitzler's enmeshment in this city.

A great deal has also been written about those works of Schnitzler's which reflect his medical background, highlight his intrigue with psychoanalysis and emphasize his link to Sigmund Freud. Theodor Reik's publication entitled *Arthur Schnitzler als Psycholog* was one of the earliest examples of Schnitzler criticism from a psychoanalytical perspective. Reik was himself a follower of Freud and in this work he claims that he was able to identify Freudian concepts in the works of Schnitzler[4]. Also among the Schnitzler criticism which relates to psychoanalysis are the publications in which his characters are examined in a manner that resembles actual case studies, such as Victor A. Oswald, Jr. and Veronica Pinter Mindness's examination of Schnitzler's figure Else in their article "Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* and the Psychoanalytic Theory of Neuroses" (1951), Robert Weiss's analysis of Robert from *Flucht in die Finsternis* (1931) in his article "A Study of the Psychiatric Elements in Schnitzler's *Flucht in die Finsternis*" (1958), and Richard H. Lawson's interpretation of the protagonist Gustl in "A Reinterpretation of Schnitzler's *Leutnant Gustl*" (1962). A more recent example is Astrid Lange-Kirchheim's essay entitled "Die Hysterikerin und ihr Autor. Arthur Schnitzlers

[4] In an examination of Schnitzler's *Frau Beate und ihr Sohn* Reik identifies instances of what, in his opinion, are connections to Freudian themes such as voyeurism, exhibitionism and infantile incestuous desires (Reik 133).

Novelle ››Fräulein Else‹‹ im Kontext von Freuds Schriften zur Hysterie" (1999). Notwithstanding all the criticism linking Schnitzler and Freud, Lorenzo Bellettini takes the position in his 2007 article that, with the exception of Lange-Kirchheim and a few other critics, most studies of the link between the two men "risk oversimplifying the affinity between Schnitzler and Freud" (12). Through his analysis of *Frau Berta Garlan* (1901), *Frau Beate und ihr Sohn* (1913), and *Fräulein Else* (1924) Bellettini aims to show how the influence of Freud's *Die Traumdeutung* (1900), *Studien über Hysterie* (1903), and *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1917) "contributed to the maturation of Schnitzler's prose style", an aspect of the link that Bellettini feels is significant (12). Many scholars have opted to analyze Schnitzler's works in a psychoanalytical light concentrating on the link between Freud and Schnitzler. This paper is, however, not a study of that nature. Rather than analyzing Schnitzler's characters as case studies, it is my intent to focus on them strictly as literary figures.

Schnitzler's works often offered very detailed accounts of daily life in *fin de siècle* Vienna, which resulted in a considerable attention on the city itself in Schnitzler research. In her 2002 study *Schnitzler's Wien*, Anne-Catherine Simon supplements her text with numerous photographs, not only of Schnitzler and those in his circle, but of Vienna—in particular the areas linked to Schnitzler—as it was during his lifetime. Simon addresses her text to "Schnitzler- ebenso wie [an] Wien-Freunde" in her endeavor to deliver multi-faceted impressions of *fin de siècle* Viennese life (9). Bruce Thompson's *Schnitzler's Vienna: Image of a Society* (1990), on the other hand, is an "attempt to establish Schnitzler's position as a chronicler and critic of the society of his day" (v).

In addition to the many works he published, Schnitzler also left his readership with a voluminous account of his own life through his personal diaries and his letter exchanges. His personal diaries constitute entries from nearly 50 years of his life with few interruptions.[5] The letter exchanges offer a glimpse of Schnitzler's relationships, both personal and professional, with some of the women in his life such as Adele Sandrock and Olga Waissnix as well as with many of his contemporaries such as Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Georg Brandes.[6] The combination of the diaries and the letter exchanges serve as an excellent resource for researchers and scholars of Schnitzler.

An area that has received considerably less attention than any of the aforementioned is the relevance of Schnitzler's works within a feminist framework, in particular regarding the emancipation of women from gender roles imposed upon them by *fin de siècle* Viennese society. While one could interpret many of Schnitzler's works as exhibiting evidence that he did indeed recognize the negative effects of a patriarchal society on women, much of the early criticism addressing Schnitzler's portrayal of women in his works dissented from this idea. Renate Möhrmann, in "Schnitzlers Frauen und Mädchen. Zwischen Sachlichkeit und Sentiment", identifies two dissenters, Georgette Boner in her dissertation "Arthur Schnitzler's Frauengestalten" and Susanne Polsterer in her dissertation "Die Darstellung der Frau in A. Schnitzlers Dramen". In

[5] Tagebuch 1879-1931. Unter Mitwirkung von Peter Michael Braunwarth [u.a.] hrsg. von der Kommission für literarische Gebrauchsformen der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Obmann: Werner Welzi. 10 Bde. Wien 1981-2000.

[6] Among the compilations of Schnitzler's letter exchanges are:
Renate Wagner, ed., Adele Sandrock und Arthur Schnitzler, Dilly: Geschichte einer Liebe in Briefen, Bildern und Dokumente (Frankfurt: 1983, Fischer Taschenbuch).
Hans Weigel, Therese Nickl, and Heinrich Schnitzler, ed., Liebe, die starb vor der Zeit. Arthur Schnitzler und Olga Waissnix. Ein Briefwechsel (Munich: Molden, 1983).
Therese Nickl and Heinrich Schnitzler, ed., Hugo von Hofmannsthal – Arthur Schnitzler: Briefwechsel (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1964).
Kurt Bergel, ed., Georg Brandes und Arthur Schnitzler. Ein Briefwechsel (Bern: Francke, 1956).

reference to Boner's examination of Schnitzler's female figures, Möhrmann's view is that Boner classifies them in a typical, traditional fashion in that she separates the figures into archetypal "dionysische" and "apollinische" categories. In describing Boner's work Möhrmann states: "Irgendwelche emanzipatorische Qualitäten der Frauenfiguren werden nirgendwo gesehen" (509). Möhrmann indicates that Susanne Polsterer, in her dissertation, "mit fast missionarischem Eifer, versucht besonders Jugendliche und Ausländer vor Schnitzler zu warnen" (509). Möhrmann suggests that both Boner and Polsterer fall short of recognizing Schnitzler's works as emancipatory with regard to the roles imposed on women by *fin de siècle* society, something that Möhrmann herself clearly opines is evident in Schnitzler's female figures. Regarding Schnitzler, Möhrmann states:

> Die Dichotomisierung des Weiblichen in ‚hohe' und ‚niedrige' Repräsentantinnen, in E-und U-Frauen sozusagen, die Fortsetzung des mittelalterlichen Dualismus von Tugend und Laster, wie er bis in die Dramatik des 20. Jahrhunderts hinein zu finden ist, hat Schnitzler nicht nachvollzogen [...] Das ist anders bei Schnitzler. Seine Frauenfiguren [sind] [...] eine Mischung aus Sachlichkeit und Sentiment, Frauen, welche versuchen, die eigene Wahrnehmung nicht mehr uneingeschränkt an den Mann zu delegieren, sondern selber zu sehen und selber zu wünschen. (508)

Möhrmann credits Barbara Gutt as one of the first scholars to make this recognition in her dissertation *Emanzipation bei Arthur Schnitzler*. In her work Gutt makes the following observation: "Es ist bezeichnend für Schnitzler und seine Frauengestalten, daß der Typ der Integrierten niemals im Mittelpunkt eines Werkes steht" (37).

While Barbara Gutt's *Emanzipation bei Arthur Schnitzler* is perhaps one of the earliest scholarly publications to classify Schnitzler's works as a contribution to the emancipation of women, there were earlier indications that Schnitzler's portrayal of

female figures was unique when compared to his predecessors and contemporaries. W. E. Yates claims "the unusual sympathy which informed his view of women and their problems was recognized in literary circles by the mid-1890s" (124). Yates lists Lou Andreas-Salomé and Hugo von Hofmannsthal as two of Schnitzler's contemporaries who recorded their recognition in letters to Schnitzler (124)[7]. Another very compelling example Yates offers is an article published in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in Vienna after Schnitzler's death on November 2, 1931. The article was written by Jewish journalist and author Klara Blum. Blum wrote for various newspapers and was a supporter of the women's movement. She credits Schnitzer with depicting his female figures in a way that was unparalleled by his contemporaries and states that Schnitzler, also unlike his contemporaries, took for granted that women should be entitled to the same rights as men:

> Schnitzler hat die alte Gesellschaft vor allem – und das ist sein entscheidendes Verdienst – in ihrer ungeheuren Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber der Frau entlarvt. Keiner hat wie er die Frau, dieses klassische Objekt der lautlos höflichen Unterdrückung und Entwertung, wie sie für das Bürgertum kennzeichnend ist, verstanden. Keiner hat wie er bis ins Tiefste und Feinste ihre Empörung gegen ihre eigene untergeordnete, nebensächliche und abhängige Lebensrolle mitgefühlt […]
>
> Der Anspruch der Frau auf gleiches Recht in Gesellschaft, Arbeit und Liebe war für Schnitzler Selbstverständlichkeit. Er ist es in unserer Zeit noch immer nicht ganz geworden. Und darum können wir Schnitzler nicht als den Vertreter alter Zeiten betrachten, sondern müssen in ihm einen Pionier sehen, den *stillen Pionier einer Idee*, deren Kampf noch im hellsten Schlaglicht der Aktualität steht: einen Pionier des *Gerechtigkeitsgedankens in der Erotik*. (3)

The suggestion that, through his works, Schnitzler might have intended to expose the issues that sanctioned gender roles in Viennese society created for women, even

[7] Andreas-Salomé in a letter she wrote to Schnitzler on 15 May 1894 after reading his *Das Märchen* and Hofmannsthal in a letter to Schnitzler on 21 Aug. 1896.

perhaps in an attempt to improve these conditions, is an idea that certainly warrants closer examination. Hence, the goal of this paper is to determine whether selected works of Schnitzler and his depiction of the female characters therein mirror or break from the socially sanctioned patterns of female behavior during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As a frame of reference for this investigation, it is important to identify relevant socially sanctioned roles of women of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in German speaking countries. Schnitzler offers many clues in his texts of his own perception of these roles. However, referencing the interpretation of such roles by a German woman who lived and wrote during that time brings an even better understanding to the roles that Schnitzler depicted through so many of his characters. While there are many women writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries whose works could serve as a reference, one woman stands out for the way in which she so clearly presents her own interpretation of sanctioned gender roles imposed upon women of her era. Hedwig Dohm was an activist for women's rights and was clearly of the opinion that the roles society imposed upon women often prohibited them from pursuing their interests and fulfilling their capabilities. Dohm, who lived in Berlin most of her life, published fictional works, but was perhaps best known for her essays on the 'Frauenfrage' and on women's rights. Dohm's place among women writers who contributed to the advancement of women's rights is certainly an important one. In a very direct and sharp style, Dohm offered her views not only of the socially sanctioned roles imposed upon women, but of the changes she advocated for women in society. Defining the intricate details of all the roles and behaviors that were attributed to women

during this era is far too encompassing to include in the framework of this project. But a great deal of insight can be gained by looking at one of Dohm's works, *Der Frauen Natur and Recht* (1876). Early in the first section, entitled 'Die Eigenschaften der Frau', Dohm poses the following questions:

1. Welche Eigenschaften haben die Frauen nach dem Dafürhalten der Majorität der Menschen?
2. Aus welchen Eigenschaften sollte oder müßte der Geschlechtscharakter des Weibes bestehen nach dem Verdikt der Männer?
3. Warum verlangen die Männer gerade diese Eigenschaften von den Frauen? Welche Eigenschaften haben die Frauen wirklich?
4. Bilden diese Eigenschaften den Geschlechtscharakter des Weibes? (9)

In addressing these questions she offers insight on her own perception of the characteristics that men wish for in a wife:

> Die Frau sei fügsam und nachgiebig, damit das Gehorchen in der Ehe, was doch ihre verdammte Pflicht und Schuldigkeit ist, nicht auf Hindernisse stoße, und die Autorität des Mannes nicht gefährdet werde.
>
> Die Frau sei bescheiden, einfach und anspruchslos, damit sie mit dem Loose, das der Mann ihr bereitet, sich gern bescheide und nicht einer ungemessenen Sehnsucht nach Sammet und Seide, nach Equipagen und Silbergeschirr, nach vornehmen Visitenkarten, Theaterlogen und Reitpferden sich hingebe, oder gar auf den absurden Einfall gerathe, einen Theil ihres Vermögens, dessen Verfügung dem Manne allein zusteht, für ihre *menus plaisirs* in Anspruch nehmen zu wollen.
>
> Die Frau sei häuslich, das heißt, sie gehe auf in Mann und Kind, in Küche und Speisekammer. (33-4)

Dohm also reveals her perception that even though men of her time desire such characteristics in the woman they marry, a woman's possession of these 'appropriate' characteristics does not necessarily breed fidelity and love in a marriage. Dohm's opinion is that a husband would still look for a woman *without* those characteristics outside the marriage.

> Besitzt nun aber Frau Schulz oder Frau Müller alle die genannten weiblichen Eigenschaften, die ihre Gatten als so begehrenswerth preisen und als das wesentliche Erforderniß einer glücklichen Ehe, - werden um dessentwillen Herr Schulz und Müller ihren gehorsamen Hausfrauen mehr Treue und Liebe bewahren, als wenn sie dieser Eigenschaften ledig wären?
>
> Schwerlich. Der Verstand, der Egoismus des Mannes hat gut reflectiren. Sein Geschmack und seine sinnliche Natur geht meistens mit seiner Reflexion durch, und im allgemeinen wird er wahrscheinlich auch als Gatte mehr Treue und Liebe aufbringen für das capriciöse Weltkind, die kokette, muntere Salondame, die kecke Amazone, als für das stille, harmlose, bescheidene Frauchen, das in stillen Winkeln für ihn schmort, backt, wäscht und flickt. (35-6)

The insight provided through Dohm's perception of this dichotomy of the archetypal assumptions regarding a woman during this era is significant to this study. The primary method of analyzing the selected works of Schnitzler will be to search for links between Schnitzler's depiction of his female characters and struggles women of the era may have faced as a result of the socially sanctioned gender roles.

Although there are several of Schnitzler's short stories that could serve as topics in an examination such as this, I have chosen to focus my investigation on selected female figures from two of Schnitzler's lesser researched and possibly lesser known works of prose, *Die Frau des Weisen* (1898) and *Der Mörder* (1921), in addition to the protagonist in one of his prominent novellas, *Fräulein Else* (1924). Schnitzler uses three different narrative perspectives in these works. While they each have a female figure that is central to the plot, the circumstances which Schnitzler depicts for the figures are very different. Yet some of the characteristics he depicts in the figures are very similar. Each work contains figures – both male and female – that exhibit extreme behaviors, which, in two of the stories, result in death. Conversely the figures vary sufficiently to serve as

subjects of an investigation of this nature. The characters I will examine, along with a brief introduction to each figure, are listed below.

- **Friederike in *Die Frau des Weisen* (1898)**

  Schnitzler depicts this story in the form of a young man journaling as he is leaving a Scandinavian resort where he had a chance meeting with Friederike, a young woman in whose home he lived during his final year in Gymnasium. Friederike was his professor's wife. Prior to their encounter in Scandinavia, he had not seen her since he left her home seven years earlier. After passing the Abitur, on the day that the young man was to leave to return to his parents, Friederike kissed him passionately, but was unaware that her husband witnessed the kiss. The young man, however, saw the professor peeping though the door at the two of them. When he meets Frederike by chance at the resort, he eventually finds out that she never even knew that her husband witnessed the kiss. This knowledge completely changes the young man's perception of Friederike and causes him to flee the resort without even saying goodbye to Friederike.

- **Elise in *Der Mörder* (1921)**

  Schnitzler tells this story through the perspective of a third-person narrator who is primarily privy only to the thoughts of the male protagonist, Alfred. Elise is a young Viennese woman who has only one person in her life to whom she is close, that being her lover, Alfred. Like Elise, Alfred has lost his parents and, as the story opens, enjoys a passionate, satisfying affair with Elise, despite the fact that she is from a lower social class than he. The relationship with Elise begins to bore Alfred and he begins to pursue a relationship with a bourgeois woman,

Adele. He intends to break off the relationship with Elise on multiple occasions. He ultimately chooses Adele over Elise, but is never able to tell Elise that their relationship is over. Instead, he murders her.

- **Else in *Fräulein Else* (1924)**

  The figure Else is a vibrant young woman whose story Schnitzler chooses to tell using stream of consciousness. Else is away from Vienna staying with her aunt at a resort in the mountains, where the story is set. A telegram from her mother early in the story causes Else much inner turmoil, which ultimately ends in her death. The stream of consciousness technique lends the reader an in-depth glimpse into Else's hopes, dreams, and fears. Else struggles with the decision presented by her mother's request in the telegram. She wants to be loyal to her family and grant her mother's request to ask an older man who is a family acquaintance for financial assistance. But doing so is costly for Else and ends in tragedy. This work is particularly interesting in that Schnitzler – a man in his sixties – uses stream of consciousness to communicate the innermost thoughts of a young female figure.

My analysis will be conducted through the depicted relationships of the figure to other characters as well as through the inner thoughts of the figure, as mediated by Schnitzler. In my analysis of these three figures I will consider the narrative perspective, the approximate age, marital status and social class of the female figures, and the desires and longings, sexual and general, that Schnitzler emphasizes in the female characters and their male counterparts in the three selected texts. As part of my strategy, I will examine how the depicted desires and longings of the female figures stand in conflict with socially

sanctioned roles of the period and consider potential reasons Schnitzler may have emphasized these desires and longings.

Upon completion of my analysis of the selected figures, I will compare how Schnitzler portrays these women's individual struggles with regard to sex, gender, and identity formation, and I will analyze to what extent Schnitzler attempts to guide his readers in their interpretation of the characters' striving to fulfill their desires. In my conclusion I will also assess whether the above referenced observations by scholars Ametsbichler and Yates regarding Schnitzler's dramas also prove to be true in relation to the three works of prose I am analyzing. Ametsbichler credits Schnitzler with the ability to "capture the essence of human nature and the confused condition of the human soul" in his dramas.[8] And Yates' observation is that Schnitzler is able to "connect with some of the principal issues of the time such as […] double standards in the relations between the sexes […]."[9] Finally, I will evaluate the texts from the perspective of their usefulness in weakening the significance of socially sanctioned roles imposed upon women in Schnitzler's contemporary society.

[8] Quoted above on page 2.
[9] Quoted above on page 3.

CHAPTER I
FRIEDERIKE IN *DIE FRAU DES WEISEN*

After appearing in the Vienna newspaper *Die Zeit* in 1896 and 1897, *Die Frau des Weisen* was published in 1898 by S. Fischer in Berlin alongside *Ein Abschied*, *Der Ehrentag*, *Blumen* and *Die Toten schweigen* as part of a collection of Schnitzler's short stories. The publication was titled *Die Frau des Weisen. Novelletten*.[10] In a letter to Schnitzler on January 16, 1897, Hugo von Hofmannsthal expressed his positive opinion of *Die Frau des Weisen* by describing the conclusion as surprising yet obvious and the progression of the plot as beautifully canny and clear: "[I]ch […] möchte Ihnen doch sagen, daß die »Frau des Weisen« eine sehr schöne Novelle ist. Ich war von der Führung des Schlusses überrascht wie von einer völlig unerwarteten und doch unendlich einfachen naheliegenden Lösung [...] Auch ist alles Äußerliche, das den Fortgang der Handlung unterstützt, wunderschön sparsam und durchsichtig" (*Briefwechsel* 77). When compared to some of Schnitzler's more widely known works of prose, however, very little criticism exists on this short story.

The story is told in first person narrative through the perspective of the male protagonist's entry in his journal after a chance meeting with Frederike, a young woman he had known seven years prior, at a Scandinavian coastal resort. The narrator, whose name Schnitzler does not reveal, lived in the home of Frederike and her husband, who was the narrator's professor during his final year of school. At the time the story begins, the narrator had recently finished his university studies and has just been jilted by his former love, Jenny, who left him to marry a clockmaker.

[10] As referenced in Ausgewählte Werke in acht Bänden, Vol. 1, page 521.

The narrator is initially very glad about meeting Friederike again at the resort. He thinks back about an event that occurred about seven years earlier on the day that his stay at Friederike's home ended. He was waiting in his room ready to depart when Friederike entered his room and caressed his face and kissed him. With her back to the door, she did not see that her husband was watching. But the narrator saw the professor looking on, and concerns about what consequences Friederike may have suffered after his departure have lingered in the narrator ever since, as has the guilt he felt over kissing his respected professor's wife.

When he sees Friederike in Scandinavia he longs to be with her and to fulfill his long desire for another passionate encounter. An opportunity for the narrator to be alone with Friederike is somewhat hindered by the fact that she is there alone with her four year old son, but finally they spend private time together and the narrator senses that Friederike desires him just as he desires her. The narrator's feelings change in an instant, however, when he learns from Friederike that she never knew her husband witnessed their kiss seven years prior:

> Während sie das erzählte, fühlte ich, wie irgend etwas in meinem Innern erstarrte. Und als sie geendet hatte, schaute ich sie an, als müßte ich sie fragen: Wer bist du? – Ich wandte mich unwillkürlich nach dem Hafen, wo ich die Segel unseres Bootes glänzen sah, und ich dachte: Wie lange, wie unendlich lange ist es her, daß wir auf diese Insel gekommen sind? Denn ich bin mit einer Frau hier gelandet, die ich geliebt habe, und jetzt geht eine Fremde an meiner Seite (141).

The narrator's perception of Friederike changes so drastically that he flees the resort without Friederike's knowledge, abandoning a planned evening rendezvous with her.

In comparison to the relationship between Friederike and the narrator, Schnitzler does not devote much attention to the relationship between Friederike and her husband,

the professor. Although Friederike's exact age is not revealed, and the narrator, a young man in his mid-twenties, only refers to her as a "junge Frau" (136), it is likely that Schnitzler aimed at presenting her as somewhat younger than her husband, who is already established in his career as a professor. The reader is not privy to the narrator's perception of Friederike's level of contentment in the relationship with her husband. While it would be problematic to surmise that the relationship between Friederike and her husband was necessarily amiss, Schnitzler constructs the character Friederike in such a way that it is apparent that there was some level of discontent in her life, and that she had sexual desires that remained unfulfilled, both during the year that the narrator lived in her home and when the two of them met again by chance in Scandinavia.

One early signal that could be interpreted as Schnitzler's intention to subtly insert a sign of discontent between Friederike and her husband is the fact that she and her son are away on vacation for two weeks without the husband. The reader is told that she will meet her husband in Copenhagen at the end of the two week period, but is not informed of the couple's plans after their meeting in Copenhagen. Another such indicator is revealed during Friederike's description of changes that had occurred in her hometown since the narrator was there seven years prior to their meeting in Scandinavia. One obvious change is the addition of a theater in town, which Friederike reveals when she tells the narrator that she is usually accompanied by her mother or her son when she attends performances at the theater that has existed for two years:

> Seit zwei Jahren gibt es ein Theater bei uns, den ganzen Winter bis Palmsonntag wird gespielt. Ich gehe zwei-, dreimal in der Woche hinein, meistens mit meiner Mutter, der macht es großes Vergnügen. »Ich auch Theater!« rief der Kleine, den Friederike an der Hand führte. »Freilich, du auch. Sonntag nachmittag«, wandte

> sie sich erklärend an mich, »spielen sie nämlich manchmal Stücke für die Kinder; da gehe ich mit dem Buben hin (132).

Schnitzler does not mention Friederike's husband as accompanying her to the theater. Just the lack of his presence with her at theater performances would not be necessarily conspicuous. But when one considers that Friederike's husband was not with her on this summer vacation at the Danish resort, one could interpret that Schnitzler intended to lead the reader to conclude that Friederike and her husband spend a significant amount of their time outside the home apart.

Although the marital relationship is not directly addressed, the reader can draw other inferences about the relationship through Schnitzler's depiction of how the narrator perceives Friederike and through the conversations that occur between the two of them. The images the narrator recalls of Friederike as he remembers her from his yearlong stay in her home provide significant clues about her. These images depict Friederike as displaying behaviors that could be typical of a woman attempting to fulfill the socially sanctioned role of a wife in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Through these images Schnitzler depicts Friederike in a manner that resembles many of the characteristics Dohm describes that were, according to the expectations of men, what a wife should be: "Die Frau soll sein nach dem Verdikt der Männer: Sanft, liebevoll, weich, fügsam, bescheiden, receptiv, passiv, keusch, sittsam, aufopferungsvoll, schüchtern, unschuldig u.s.w." (16). Friederike is depicted as a meek, mild, submissive woman who carries coffee to her husband in the garden.

Early in the story the narrator reflects upon the way Frederike would look up at his window with a smile on her face from the garden when she brought her husband

coffee in the afternoon. He indicates that he did not understand the look she gave him until the final hour before his departure from her home:

> Und ich erinnerte mich, wie Friederike in den Garten gekommen, ihm [ihrem Mann] einen Nachmittagskaffee gebracht und dabei zu meinem Fenster hinaufgeschaut, lächelnd, mit einem Blicke, den ich damals nicht verstanden […] bis zu jener letzten Stunde (130).

Later the narrator says he remembers Frederike as if she were two different figures. One image, which he indicates as the image he had of her during his entire stay in her home except on the final day, is of a pale, gentle mother figure that stroked his cheeks:

> In der Erinnerung erscheint mir Friederike in zwei verschiedenen Gestalten. Meist seh' ich sie als eine blasse, sanfte Frau, die, mit einem weißen Morgenkleid angetan, im Garten sitzt, wie eine Mutter zu mir ist und mir die Wangen streichelt (133).

In the narrator's description of the other image he recalls of her, he goes into a detailed account of the final hour of his stay when Friederike entered his bedroom and secretly kissed him. Although lengthy, this passage will be quoted in its entirety, as it is significant in that Schnitzler depicts a completely opposite side of Friederike. Here, she is depicted in a sensually aggressive manner as she pursues her passion for the narrator:

> Sie trat näher, lehnte sich an den Tisch, stützte beide Hände nach rückwärts auf dessen Kante und sah mich ernst an. Ganz leise sagte sie: »Also heute?« Ich nickte nur und fühlte das erstemal sehr tief, wie traurig es eigentlich war, daß ich von hier fort mußte. Sie schaute eine Weile zu Boden und schwieg. Dann erhob sie den Kopf und kam näher auf mich zu. Sie legte beide Hände ganz leicht auf meine Haare, wie sie es ja schon früher oft getan, aber ich wußte in diesem Moment, daß es etwas anderes bedeutete als sonst. Dann ließ sie ihre Hände langsam über meine Wangen heruntergleiten, und ihr Blick ruhte mit unendlicher Innigkeit auf mir. Sie schüttelte den Kopf mit einem schmerzlichen Ausdruck, als könnte sie irgend etwas nicht fassen. »Mußt du denn schon heute weg?« fragte sie leise. »Ja«, sagte ich. – »Auf immer?« rief sie aus. »Nein«, antwortete ich. – »O ja«, sagte sie mit schmerzlichem Zucken der Lippen, »es ist auf immer. Wenn du uns auch einmal besuchen wirst... in zwei oder drei Jahren – heute gehst du doch für immer von uns fort.« – Sie sagte das mit einer Zärtlichkeit, die gar nichts Mütterliches mehr hatte. Mich durchschauerte es. Und plötzlich küßte sie mich.

> Zuerst dachte ich nur: das hat sie ja nie getan. Aber als ihre Lippen sich von den meinen gar nicht lösen wollten, verstand ich, was dieser Kuß zu bedeuten hatte. Ich war verwirrt und glücklich; ich hätte weinen mögen. Sie hatte die Arme um meinen Hals geschlungen, ich sank, als wenn sie mich hingedrängt hätte, in die Ecke des Divans; Friederike lag mir zu Füßen auf den Knieen und zog meinen Mund zu dem ihren herab. Dann nahm sie meine beiden Hände und vergrub ihr Gesicht darin. Ich flüsterte ihren Namen und staunte, wie schön er war. Der Duft von ihren Haaren stieg zu mir auf; ich atmete ihn mit Entzücken ein [...] (134-35).

In this scene Friederike is depicted as quite the opposite of the motherly figure he previously described. Friederike, in these intimate moments in the narrator's room, is described as aggressive and passionate. This changed abruptly when she thought she heard footsteps, at which time she ended the intimate moment and, out of fear, told the narrator to go quickly: "Geh, geh, rasch" (135).

Another noteworthy observation about Friederike's relationship to her husband is that she, at least once, exhibits fear of him. The narrator describes her as someone "mit unsäglicher Angst" when she thought she had noticed her husband's footsteps outside the room in the moment they were kissing (135). This moment of fear is mentioned again later in the story during the conversation in which the narrator discovers that Friederike never knew that her husband had witnessed the kiss. While Schnitzler depicts Friederike as a woman who is obviously afraid of her husband discovering the intimate kiss that occurred between her and the narrator, he never reveals exactly what type of retribution she fears could happen if her husband were to find out. Indeed her fear could even be related to the revelation that she actually has desires that do not conform to the socially sanctioned gender role that she tries to fulfill. Regardless of the reason for her fear, Schnitzler uses it to show her submissive position in relation to her husband.

While Schnitzler leaves much of the information regarding Friederike's relationship with her husband to the reader's inference, he conversely, through the narrator's perspective, offers many details, from the narrator's perspective, of the narrator's relationship with Friederike and about Friederike herself. He mentions her beauty early in his account of their chance meeting in the Scandinavian resort town and later, as the two meet in the early morning for their boat ride to the island, he describes her youthful appearance and the way she was dressed as very beautiful: "Sie war sehr schön" (128); "[s]ie war ganz weiß gekleidet und sah aus wie ein achtzehnjähriges Mädchen" (137).

The narrator indicates he had nearly completely forgotten Frederike when he states: "[U]nd so war es geschehen, daß ich die junge Frau beinahe völlig vergessen hatte" (136). However, thoughts of his former love, Jenny, who married a clockmaker, fade rather quickly when he again meets Friederike. After seeing Friederike again for the first time in seven years, his feelings for her quickly come back to him and are even stronger than before. Schnitzler implies that she becomes somewhat of an obsession to the narrator, so much so that he even thinks he loves her and that he absolutely must have her, which he states in a way that leaves little room for alternative interpretation, when he explains: "Nun aber ist mit einem Mal alles wieder da, was jenes Geschehnis damals zum Erlebnis machte; und alles ist heftiger als damals, denn ich liebe Friederike; […] und ich fühlte, daß Friederike mir gehören mußte, wann ich wollte" (136).

The narrator hastily departs from this passionate desire for Friederike the very instant that he realizes that she never knew that her husband witnessed the kiss. Upon this realization his entire perception of her changes and he no longer wants to look at her

or converse with her. He simply makes conversation until the boat trip back to the resort ends and allows her to believe he will accept her invitation to accompany her on an evening, presumably intimate, boat ride later in the day. Schnitzler depicts the conversation between the narrator and Friederike as they sailed back to the resort, which, unbeknownst to the figure Friederike, would be her final conversation with the narrator. Significant is how Schnitzler emphasizes the narrator's extreme perception of Friederike at this point, as well as the fact that the narrator lets Friederike to believe that his desire for her remains:

> »Zu meinen Füßen sollen Sie liegen«, sagte Friederike, und ich streckte mich am Boden des Kahnes aus, legte meinen Kopf auf den Schoß Friederikens. Es war mir recht, daß ich ihr nicht ins Gesicht sehen mußte. Sie sprach, und mir war, als klänge es aus weiter Ferne. Ich verstand alles und konnte doch zugleich meine Gedanken weiter denken.
>
> Mich schauderte vor ihr.
>
> »Heute abend fahren wir zusammen aufs Meer hinaus«, sagte sie. Etwas Gespenstisches schien mir um sie zu gleiten.
>
> »Heut abend aufs Meer«, wiederholte sie langsam, »auf einem Ruderboot. Rudern kannst du doch?«
>
> »Ja«, sagte ich. Mich schauderte vor dem tiefen Verzeihen, das sie schweigend umhüllte, ohne daß sie es wußte.
>
> Sie sprach weiter. »Wir werden uns ins Meer hinaustreiben lassen – und werden allein sein. – Warum redest du nicht?« fragte sie.
>
> »Ich bin glücklich«, sagte ich.
>
> Mir schauerte vor dem stummen Schicksal, das sie seit so vielen Jahren erlebt, ohne es zu ahnen.
>
> Wir glitten hin.
>
> Einen Augenblick fuhr es mir durch den Sinn: Sag es ihr. Nimm dieses Unheimliche von ihr; dann wird sie wieder ein Weib sein für dich wie andere, und du wirst sie begehren. Aber ich durfte es nicht. – Wir legten an.
>
> Ich sprang aus dem Boot; half ihr beim Aussteigen.
>
> »Der Bub wird sich schon nach mir sehnen. Ich muß rasch gehen. Lassen Sie mich jetzt allein.«

> Es war lebhaft am Strand; ich merkte, daß wir von einigen Leuten beobachtet wurden.
>
> »Und heute abend«, sagte sie, »um neun bin ich... aber was hast du denn?«
>
> »Ich bin sehr glücklich«, sagte ich.
>
> »Heute abend«, sagte sie, »um neun Uhr bin ich hier am Strand, bin ich bei dir. – Auf Wiedersehen!«
>
> Und sie eilte davon.
>
> »Auf Wiedersehen!« sagte auch ich und blieb stehen. – Aber ich werde sie nie wiedersehen (142-43).

Although a detailed analysis of the narrator's abrupt change of heart is not the primary focus of this paper, I will address the subject since Schnitzler's depiction of the narrator's perceptions of Friederike are the sole basis for all that the reader knows about her. The actions of the narrator are not what the reader would expect after Schnitzler's depiction of his narrator's intense desire for the figure Friederike. In their 1976 article "Der Sprung ins Bewusstsein. Zu einigen Erzählungen von Arthur Schnitzler" scholars Leroy and Pastor theorize that the narrator fled because of an incest taboo based on an underlying mother-son relationship between him and Friederike since she served as his housemother for a year (492-93). Another possible interpretation that Leroy and Pastor suggest for this situation is that her husband's forgiveness made her less desirable for the narrator (491-92). The reference to Friederike's husband in the title as "weise" might even be a foreshadowing of his understanding of the functioning of the human psyche in situation such as facing the threat of a younger competitor for his wife's attention.

Weinberger, in his 1999 article "A Lover's Flight: Arthur Schnitzler's 'Die Frau des Weisen,'" offers yet another interpretation which is based on a perception that Schnitzler had created a narrator with the need to control women. Weinberger suggests that "leaving Friederike as he does, he achieves a measure of control over her or over the

situation in which he has found himself" (289). He points out that the narrator was recently jilted by his former love, Jenny, and perhaps that "the narrator's will to power and perhaps his desire to avenge himself on womankind exceed his desire for a sexual relationship with [Friederike]" (289). Such an interpretation could suggest Schnitzler's intention to design his figures in such a way that exhibit struggles with the gender roles imposed upon them by society. In regard this particular interpretation of the narrator's flight, it appears that he struggles between his own sexual desires and being compelled to adhere to the sanctioned role of the male as dominant in the relationship. It appears that Schnitzler aimed at emphasizing that the narrator's perception that Friederike controlled the relationship up to the point of the narrator's realization that Friederike's husband had no knowledge of the prior incident.

Weinberger's interpretation that Schnitzler appears to depict the narrator's perception of Friederike as dominating the relationship up to the point of his flight appears to be supported by the text. However, even though the narrator is depicted as perceiving Friederike as the dominant party between the two of them, Schnitzler seems to imply that the professor and Friederike's attempt to adhere to her role as a wife are the two greater factors controlling the relationship between Friederike and the narrator. Supporting the idea that the professor was in control is that fact that Schnitzler depicts him as allowing the passionate moment between the narrator and Friederike in his home to continue instead of interrupting it. The idea that Friederike's role as a wife caused her to suppress her desire for the narrator is supported by two above quoted passages. The first example is the above quoted passage in which Schnitzler depicts the narrator's recollection of the way Friederike looked up at his window when she served her husband

coffee in the afternoon and how she smiled at him and gave him a look that he at that time did not understand. The other passage is part of a conversation between the narrator and Friederike that occurs in Scandinavia in which Schnitzler depicts Friederike as indicating that she felt the attraction to the narrator for a period of time before she acted on her desires on the day of his departure. She states that she reminded herself that he was only a child and that her feelings toward him were of a motherly nature. But as the time for his departure drew nearer, she could not hold back anymore. She even states that she did not *want* to kiss him that day:

> »Anfangs habe ich mir selbst gesagt: er ist ein Kind... wie eine Mutter habe ich ihn gern. Aber je näher die Stunde kam, um die Sie abreisen sollten...«
>
> Sie unterbrach sich eine Weile, dann sprach sie weiter:
>
> »Und endlich war die Stunde da. – Ich habe nicht zu dir wollen – ich weiß nicht, was mich hinaufgetrieben hat. Und wie ich schon bei dir war, hab ich dich auch nicht küssen wollen – aber...« (140).

In both of these examples Schnitzler appears to depict Friederike as suppressing her desires in an attempt to fulfill the role of a good wife. And, at the point when she does attempt to break out of the mold that this role imposes upon her, her husband is there looking on and permits it.

Early in the meeting in Scandinavia Schnitzler does appear to depict Friederike as the one who controls the relationship. She seems be hesitant at first about spending time with the narrator and when they do end up spending time together, it is usually at her initiation. Not to be forgotten, though, is that Schnitzler depicts Friederike at this point as the mother of a four year old son, and her son was with her in Scandinavia. Having a child of that age with her presents a risk that her husband may find out about any time she

spends with the narrator. Because of this, Friederike's fear of her husband could be interpreted as a factor in her relationship with the narrator just as it had been seven years earlier in her home. One passage seems to support this interpretation. It is during a conversation between Friederike and the narrator that takes place early in their meeting in Scandinavia. Friederike declines the narrator's invitation to dine together and indicates she prefers to eat with her son in their hotel room rather than among others. At the end of this exchange, Friederike shakes his hand and walks away without looking back. Her son, however, turns around and looks at the narrator again, indicating that he had taken notice of the stranger with whom his mother was conversing:

> Können wir nicht zusammen gehen?« fragte er [der Erzähler].
>
> »Ich speise mit dem Buben auf meinem Zimmer, ich bin nicht gern unter so vielen Menschen.«
>
> »Wann sehen wir uns wieder?«
>
> Sie wies lächelnd mit den Augen auf die kleine Strandpromenade. »Hier muß man einander doch immer begegnen«, sagte sie – und als sie merkte, daß ich von ihrer Antwort unangenehm berührt war, setzte sie hinzu: »Besonders, wenn man Lust dazu hat. – Auf Wiedersehen.«

The latter could be seen as a rather coquettish reply to this situation intended to further characterize Friederike's demeanor, before Schnitzler wraps up this encounter with the following matter of fact observation through the eyes of the narrator: "Sie reichte mir die Hand, und ohne sich noch einmal umzusehen, entfernte sie sich. Der kleine Junge blickte aber noch einmal nach mir zurück" (129).

Both in her home and in Scandinavia, Schnitzler subtly depicts Friederike as a woman who struggles between pursuing her own desires and fulfilling the role of wife and mother as she believes to be socially appropriate. Although Schnitzler does not make

the inner struggles of Friederike the obvious focus of the story, he aims at depicting a conflict within her. From the information the reader is given, it is possible to say that Friederike possesses many of the characteristics that Dohm listed as attributes that men in her view desire in a wife. Friederike is depicted as submissive and as having fear of her husband, which indicates that she is not the one in control of her marriage. She is also depicted as an apparently loving, attentive mother. Conversely, Friederike is also depicted as possessing some of the characteristics that Dohm views as desirable by a man in a woman he takes for his own enjoyment but that would not be desirable in a wife.

While the purpose of this paper is not to prove Dohm's theory regarding the two-sided rendering of the characteristics which men supposedly find 'appropriate' versus those characteristics men, according to her, desire in women, Friederike serves as a good example of a female figure who vacillates between these two sets of characteristics. In shaping her character this way, Schnitzler seems to aim at focusing the reader's attention on Friederike's inner struggle of suppressing desires that she interprets as socially inappropriate. Her pent up sexual desires erupt in a passionate encounter with the narrator in her home, only to be squelched by the thought that she heard her husband coming.

In summary, the fact that Schnitzler allows the reader to participate in this conflict that he projects into Friederike certainly thematizes one of the many struggles that women faced at the time. It is interesting to note that Schnitzler nevertheless depicts the narrator as one who views himself as a victim – first a very young man lured into a passionate moment by his housemother and ultimately, for reasons Schnitzler leaves undefined, as a man whose desire for a sexual encounter with Friederike is ruined by the

very fact that he realizes Friederike is unaware of her husband's knowledge of their first encounter. Schnitzler seems to be depicting the change in the narrator's perception of Friederike as going from seeing her as a sexual object to seeing her as a woman who could potentially have true feelings for him. The image of Friederike he portrays in the narrator prior to the revelation that she is not aware of her husband's knowledge of their previous encounter has some similarities to the characteristics Dohm describes as society's interpretation of women produced by the Salon.[11] The narrator's earlier image of Friederike was as a woman who was somewhat aggressive, in Dohm's word a "tiger", and was full of nerves to pursue her passions despite the potential consequences. Once the narrator realizes she was not pursuing him despite potential consequences this image seems to be undone.

Clearly, in his depiction of both the male and female protagonist, Schnitzler exhibits an awareness of the struggles caused by the sanctioned gender roles of his time. He depicts Friederike as taking steps to break out of her role as a gentle, demure wife. Schnitzler even goes so far as to depict Friederike's husband as *permitting* her to cross the boundary of her role as a wife. Friederike's pursuit of her desire for the narrator ends, however, by the narrator's decision to flee. As the earliest of the three of Schnitzler's female figures I am investigating in this paper, the figure Friederike is an example of Schnitzler's addressing the effects of gender roles in contemporary society through his fictional characters. He does not, however, address the internal struggles faced by the

[11] "Das Salonleben producirt träge, intrigante, graciöse, putzsüchtige und nervöse Individuen, die " demi monde" üppige, herzlose, verschwenderische und raffinirte Exemplare der Weiblichkeit" (Dohm 15).

protagonist Friederike with the same emphasis that he seems to do with his later female characters.

CHAPTER II
ELISE IN *DER MÖRDER*

Schnitzler's short story *Der Mörder* first appeared in the Vienna newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* on June 4, 1911. It became part of his next collection of short stories, entitled *Masken und Wunder*, that was published in Berlin by S. Fischer in 1921. In addition to *Der Mörder*, the collection contained *Die Hirtenflöte*, *Der Tod des Junggesellen*, *Der tote Gabriel*, *Das Tagebuch der Redegonda*, and *Die dreifache Warnung*.[12] Like *Die Frau des Weisen*, *Der Mörder* has received relatively little critical attention in comparison to some of Schnitzler's wider known works. In the foreword of her English translation of the story Margret Schaefer acknowledges that Schnitzler addresses the theme of an upper-middle-class man in a relationship with a lower class woman as he had done in previous plays and works of prose. She then describes *Der Mörder* by saying: "But this revealing narrative is a darker, more extreme version of the theme. It is a chilling account of ever more desperate deceptions and betrayals" (x). Schaefer's observation will be important to consider in the conclusion of this paper when comparing the three works I am analyzing.

The female figure I will analyze in this work is Elise, a young Viennese woman of lower class who is in a relationship with Alfred, a young bourgeois bachelor. As in *Die Frau des Weisen*, the reader must rely on the interactions between the male and female figures to gather information about Elise. Schnitzler depicts very little interaction between her and any other characters. Furthermore, Schnitzler uses very little dialogue in general in this work. He tells the story through a third person narrator who is essentially

[12] As referenced in Ausgewählte Werke in acht Bänden, Vol. 2, page 489.

only privy to the thoughts of the male protagonist Alfred. It is therefore necessary in this work, as in *Die Frau des Weisen*, to provide an adequate analysis of the male protagonist in order to better understand the figure Elise.

Schnitzler depicts both Elise and Alfred as being without living family members. Alfred has his circle of bourgeois friends whom he sees much less frequently since he became in involved with Elise. But Elise is depicted as woman who has only one person in her life to whom she is close, that being her lover, Alfred. Alfred is a non-practicing attorney, and prior to meeting Alfred, Elise worked in a department store. Early in their relationship Alfred convinced Elise to give up her position so that she could spend all of her time pleasing him. Alfred and Elise are depicted early in the relationship as enjoying their passionate, satisfying affair, despite Elise's lower social class. The relationship with Elise, however, eventually begins to bore Alfred. When he meets a young bourgeois woman, Adele, who is the daughter of a prominent factory owner, he pursues a relationship with her as well.

As the work progresses, Alfred carries on both the relationship with Adele and the one with Elise. He then makes the decision to become engaged to Adele. On the evening before he plans to ask Adele's father for her hand in marriage, he goes to Elise with the intent of telling her about Adele and his wishes to end the relationship with her. During this meeting he learns of Elise's illness, a heart condition, from which she, unbeknownst to Alfred, has been suffering for some time. Upon learning about her illness Alfred is more drawn to her than ever, and instead of ending the relationship with Elise he discusses plans for a trip with her that would hopefully provide some relief from her

illness. He finds it difficult to leave Elise and after his departure from her considers writing a parting letter to Adele.

However, as happens repeatedly throughout the story, Alfred's tender feelings for Elise soon fade and he approaches Adele's father to ask for Adele's hand in marriage. Instead of granting permission for Alfred and Adele to become engaged, her father insists that Alfred embark on a journey abroad for one year. If, at the end of the year of separation, their feelings remain strong for each other, the father will then grant his permission for them to marry. Schnitzler depicts Alfred as outwardly reluctant, but he eventually agrees with Adele's father's proposal while feeling covertly relieved that he will now have an entire year to end the relationship with Elise. This coincidentally allows him to take the trip that he had promised Elise.

Schnitzler depicts the first several months of the trip as a period during which Elise and Alfred seemingly enjoy the adventure of seeing new and exciting places and during which Elise's health is relatively good. Later during the trip Elise's health starts to decline and she must be treated more frequently with morphine. True to Alfred's character, he eventually becomes bored with Elise and no longer finds amusement in their journey. Although their passionate sexual relationship continues, he grows more and more resentful of Elise and wishes to end the relationship once and for all.

The final destination of their journey is Ceylon. It is during the return voyage from there to Hamburg that Alfred's desire to end the relationship with Elise turns to desperation, even to the point of hoping that she may die from her heart condition. It is also on this journey that they meet a German baron who is smitten with Elise. Alfred hopes that Elise develops a mutual interest in the baron, but this is not the case. During a

daylong stop in Naples Alfred snaps and quickly devises and puts into action a plan to murder Elise. He leaves the ship for the day and goes to various physicians in Naples portraying himself as a morphine addict in need of a fix. He obtains multiple prescriptions and has them filled at various pharmacies then returns to the ship.

Alfred slips the morphine into the glass of water Elise drinks from each night while they are in bed in their cabin. He is not concerned that he could be suspected of murdering Elise as the ship's doctor has treated her during their journey and is aware of her condition. In fact, after he poisons Elise, he calls the ship's doctor and acts as if Elise has suffered an attack and requests that the doctor try to help her. It is, of course, too late. The doctor, who thinks Alfred and Elise are a married couple, indicates that he feared this would happen if Alfred and Elise did not heed his advice to refrain from passionate sexual encounters. The next day Elise's body is disposed of in a burial at sea.

Upon arrival in Hamburg Alfred discovers that the German baron is staying at the same hotel. Alfred reluctantly agrees to dine with the baron that evening. The next day Alfred returns to his apartment in Vienna. His mind is on Elise and he manages to convince himself that her death was a natural progression of her illness. The following day he goes to Adele's house at the appointed time only to find that six months prior she had become engaged to one of his friends. He cannot accept her news. He tells her what he had done to Elise and insists he had done it *for* Adele. Adele is resolute that her relationship with Alfred is over. Alfred leaves, contemplating suicide.

Alfred returns to his apartment and finds the German baron and two young men from the German embassy there waiting for him. The baron indicates that there is a matter about which he must confront Alfred and that he intends to do it before sundown.

After contemplating confessing the truth to the baron and then deciding against it, Alfred accepts the baron's challenge to a duel. Alfred rounds up his seconds and brings Adele's fiancé and one other friend along. The story ends with Alfred being shot by the baron in the duel. As he is dying after falling to the ground, his mind is on Elise and her body that lies at the bottom of the sea.

Many of the events in this work can be anticipated based on Schnitzler's characterizations of Elise and Alfred that he establishes early. Schnitzler goes to great lengths to emphasize the negative characteristics he attributes to Alfred. Conversely, he paints an exceptionally sympathetic picture of Elise. Alfred, as portrayed by Schnitzler, is a man who differentiates between the qualities he values in a wife and those he enjoys in a woman with whom he has a passionate sexual affair, but never intends to marry. Elise is depicted as a woman who places her complete dependence on a man and whose primary goal in life is to please him, particularly from a sexual standpoint.

Based on Schnitzler's forthrightness in leading the reader's opinions of the figures in this work, one could interpret that he intended to characterize his protagonists as exhibiting extreme behaviors in order to bring to light the struggles that members of his society faced as a result of attempting to live up to the standards of the sanctioned roles of the era. It seems noteworthy to mention that Schnitzler introduces the theme of sanctioned roles already in the first few lines of the story when he describes both Alfred and Elise as having no living relatives whose opinions of their interclass relationship they must consider:

> Ein junger Mann, Doktor beider Rechte, ohne seinen Beruf auszuüben, elternlos, in behaglichen Umständen lebend, als liebenswürdiger Gesellschafter wohl gelitten, stand nun seit mehr als einem Jahre in Beziehungen zu einem Mädchen

> geringerer Abkunft, das, ohne Verwandtschaft gleich ihm, keinerlei Rücksichten auf die Meinung der Welt zu nehmen genötigt war (50).

Although he depicts both characters as without *family* to criticize their relationship, he makes it clear that Alfred has a problem with Elise's lower social status and with what members of his Viennese bourgeois circle would think if they knew about the relationship. Schnitzler goes as far as to portray Alfred as having nearly completely avoided his bourgeois friends since he began the relationship with Elise:

> Wohl war ihm die Fähigkeit und, was er sich noch höher anrechnen mochte, die Rücksicht eigen, Elise von solchen Stimmungen nichts merken zu lassen, immerhin aber hatten sie die Wirkung, ihn wieder öfter die Geselligkeit jener gutbürgerlichen Kreise aufsuchen zu lassen, denen er im Laufe des letzten Jahres sich beinahe völlig entfremdet hatte (50).

Another example of Alfred's concern with Elise's social status occurs after he meets Adele for the first time at a dance. In this passage Schnitzler depicts Alfred as a figure with a keen awareness of social class and his position therein. Upon meeting Adele he starts to think of the possibility of a relationship with her as much more appropriate for a man of his status. Schnitzler depicts Alfred as poignantly differentiating himself from a woman of Elise's class when Alfred goes as far as to say that a man of his means should be able to consider his affair with Elise as something of a burdensome adventure and simply put it behind him and move on:

> Und als ihm bei Gelegenheit einer Tanzunterhaltung eine vielumworbene junge Dame, die Tochter eines begüterten Fabrikbesitzers, mit auffallender Freundlichkeit entgegenkam, und er so plötzlich die leichte Möglichkeit einer Verbindung vor sich sah, die seiner Stellung und seinem Vermögen angemessen war, begann er jene andere, die wie ein heiter zwangloses Abenteuer angefangen, als lästige Fessel zu empfinden, die ein junger Mann von seinen Vorzügen unbedenklich abschütteln dürfte (50-1).

Schnitzler emphasizes Alfred's concern with social class yet again when, during the early period of the yearlong trip abroad, he portrays Alfred as carefully avoiding crowded places where he might possibly see someone he knows, specifically places such as grand hotel restaurants and promenades: "Und während er zu Beginn der Reise Begegnungen mit Bekannten vorsichtig auszuweichen gesucht, es möglichst vermieden hatte, mit Elisen sich auf belebteren Promenaden und in den Speisesälen großer Hotels zu zeigen […]" (54). Schnitzler's choice to name these two particular places leaves little doubt that he intended to depict Alfred as a figure who is extremely conscious of the issue of social class. Both promenades and grand hotel restaurants are locations where a young man of the era would likely have been proud to display a lovely woman on his arm. Also important to consider is that when traveling abroad, the likelihood of coincidentally meeting acquaintances would, as one would assume, be rather scant. In my view, Schnitzler uses this passage to make the point that Alfred's problem with Elise's lower social class is more than just a fear of what others may think. It seems that Schnitzler is indicating that the root of Alfred's problem with escorting Elise in crowded places is that *Alfred* is aware that she is below him in class and, hence, of lesser value.

In addition to depicting Alfred as egotistical and very concerned with social class, Schnitzler portrays him as selfish by telling the reader that in the very beginning of the relationship between Alfred and Elise, Alfred caused Elise to leave her job at a department store simply so his own happiness would be undisturbed. Then in the very next sentence Schnitzler mentions Alfred's accustomed restlessness in the relationship and his desire to end it:

> Gleich zu Beginn der Bekanntschaft, weniger aus Güte oder Leidenschaft als aus dem Bedürfnis, sich seines neuen Glückes auf möglichst ungestörte Weise zu erfreuen, hatte Alfred die Geliebte veranlaßt, ihre Stellung als Korrespondentin in einem ansehnlichen Wiener Warenhause aufzugeben. Doch nachdem er sich längere Zeit hindurch, von ihrer dankbaren Zärtlichkeit umschmeichelt, im bequemsten Genusse gemeinsamer Freiheit wohler befunden hatte als in irgendeinem früheren Verhältnis, begann er nun allmählich jene ihm wohlbekannte verheißungsvolle Unruhe zu verspüren, wie sie ihm sonst das nahe Ende einer Liebesbeziehung anzukündigen pflegt, ein Ende, das nur in diesem Falle vorläufig nicht abzusehen schien (50).

Schnitzler reveals important characteristics about Alfred through his relationship with Adele as well. Although Schnitzler depicts Adele as an appropriate candidate to court and to ultimately marry from Alfred's perspective, he continues his relationship with Elise. This establishes Schnitzler's depiction of Alfred as a man of double standards, at least with regard to his relationship with women. Schnitzler makes this even clearer when the narrator tells the reader that after becoming involved with Adele, when Alfred intended to end his relationship with Elise, he instead ended up thoughtlessly pledging his lifelong fidelity to Elise:

> Und so kam es dahin, daß Elise sich niemals heißer von ihm angebetet glaubte, als wenn er von einer neuen Begegnung mit Adele, wenn er durchbebt von der Erinnerung süßfragender Blicke, verheißender Händedrücke und zuletzt im Rausch der ersten heimlichen Brautküsse in jenes stille, ihm allein und seiner treulosen Liebe geweihte Heim zurückgekehrt war; und statt mit dem Lebewohl, das er sich noch auf der Schwelle vorgenommen, verließ Alfred die Geliebte allmorgendlich mit erneuten Schwüren ewigen Angehörens (51).

Since Alfred pledged a commitment of fidelity to Elise, one can assume that such a figure would expect the same from the women to whom he committed.

Schnitzler takes his depiction of Alfred's unwillingness to commit in a relationship with a woman even further when Alfred contemplates a letter in which he would tell Adele that he is not suited for long term happiness with any one woman:

> Niemals so zärtlich geliebt, nie aber auch so durchtränkt von eigener Zärtlichkeit hatte er je von ihr Abschied genommen als in dieser Nacht, so daß er auf dem Heimweg ernstlich einen Absagebrief an Adele erwog, in dem er seine Flucht aus Verlobung und Eheband wie ein Gebot seiner für ein dauernd stilles Glück nicht geschaffenen unsteten Natur zu entschuldigen gedachte (52).

In this passage Schnitzler seems to give the reader the clearest glimpse of the internal struggle he aims at depicting in Alfred. Here he portrays Alfred as apparently realizing that the choices he makes will not bring him or the women in his life happiness. But true to the indecisive nature Schnitzler has established in his figure, Alfred decides that writing the letter is not worth the effort and falls asleep only to awake and discover that his tender feelings toward Elise are gone and becoming engaged to Adele is all that matters to him.

As the story closes, Schnitzler depicts Alfred's dying thoughts as he lay by the Danube. Alfred thinks of Elise as one who is beloved beyond words and he thinks of his own death as atonement for killing her. Alfred feels blessed that he is joining her:

> Vor Sonnenuntergang in den Auen nächst der Donau, an einem für solche Zusammenkünfte gern gewählten Platz, stand er dem Baron gegenüber. Eine Ruhe, die er nach den Wirren der abgelaufenen Tage wie ein Glück empfand, empfing ihn. Als er den Lauf der Pistole auf sich gerichtet sah, während dreier Sekunden, die, von einer fernen Stimme abgezählt, gleich drei kalten Tropfen vom Abendhimmel auf den klingenden Boden fielen, dachte er einer unsäglich Geliebten, über deren verwesenden Leib die Wogen des Meeres rannen. Und als er auf dem Boden lag und etwas Dunkles über ihn sich beugte, ihn umschloß, ihn nicht mehr lassen wollte, fühlte er selig, daß er, ein Entsühnter, für sie, zu ihr ins Nichts entschwand, nach dem er sich lange gesehnt hatte (70).

One could describe Schnitzler's portrayal of Alfred as selfish, controlling, indecisive, cowardly, less than ambitious, egotistical, overly class-conscious and as someone who is primarily interested in fulfilling his own pleasures at the expense of others. Throughout the majority of the work Schnitzler does not initiate the reader to the possibility that

Alfred could also be understood as someone who also can be vulnerable. The fact that Schnitzler depicts Alfred as being murdered in the end seems to indicate that he, too, is a victim of sorts of the sanctioned roles he tries to fulfill.

Elise, on the other hand, is depicted as a woman of meager means who is making her own way and providing for herself by working until she meets Alfred. Schnitzler also portrays her at various points in the text as passionate, loving, loyal, gentle, and beautiful. Until Schnitzler reveals Elise's heart condition, her only significant flaw – even in the eyes of Alfred – seems to be that she is of lesser value because of her social class. Interestingly, the social class into which she was born as well as her heart condition are both things over which she has no control. The fact that circumstances beyond Elise's control are depicted as the things that the male protagonist dislikes the most about her contribute to the characterization of Elise as a victim. Schnitzler's depiction of Elise as a gentle, beautiful, passionate woman is nearly as extreme as his negative depiction of Alfred.

Since Schnitzler's Elise more or less surrenders control of her own destiny when she resigns her job to be kept by Alfred, it is difficult to assess the figure's ability to fulfill any of her hopes and desires other than the apparent fulfillment of her sexual passions with Alfred. Schnitzler's depiction of Elise through the narrator's lens – one which Schnitzler clearly gives the slant of the male protagonist's point of view – is as a happy and contented woman who seems to have everything she desires in Alfred. The only instance in the text where Schnitzler slightly opens the door for interpreting discontent in Elise is when onboard the ship she tells Alfred that the time she spends with the German baron is not out of genuine interest in the baron, but is rather with the intent

of making Alfred jealous. When Alfred acts as if he is bothered by Elise's time spent with the baron it makes Elise happy:

> Doch als er Elise einmal scheinbar ärgerlich über ihre auffallende Freundlichkeit zur Rede zu stellen versuchte, erklärte sie ihm lächelnd, daß all dies entgegenkommende Wesen andern gegenüber nichts anderes bezweckt hätte, als des Geliebten Eifersucht zu erregen, und sie der gelungenen List sich unsäglich freute (57).

It is tempting to interpret this as Schnitzler's depiction of a sign of Elise's fear that she is losing Alfred and to even go so far as to presume that Schnitzler perhaps intended for the reader to sense that Elise was fully aware of Alfred's infidelity, even though the narrator specifically says she did not know and would never know about it (50). The scenario Schnitzler depicts in which Elise attempts to evoke jealousy in Alfred could, however, also be interpreted as playful behavior that is part of a courtship and does not necessarily indicate a fear of losing one's partner. Therefore it is my interpretation that Schnitzler did indeed intend to portray Elise as completely devoted to and satisfied by Alfred. His intended depiction of Elise – like that of Alfred – appears to be to create a figure that exhibits extreme characteristics brought on by the expectations to fulfill sanctioned roles.

In examining Adele, Schnitzler clearly does not depict her in such an extreme fashion as he does his male and female protagonists. Adele is depicted as a victim of Alfred due to his infidelity. However, Schnitzler does not lead the reader to pity Adele as he does Elise. And, unlike Elise, he ultimately portrays Adele – through the intervention of her father – as escaping Alfred's victimization. Schnitzler does not depict Adele as being aware of Alfred's infidelity. Even so, one could interpret her ability to get out of a relationship built on deceit as a privilege of her social status since it was her father who initiated the separation from Alfred. Schnitzler seems to aim at depicting the father as

protecting his daughter. The reader gets the sense that Schnitzler intends to depict the father as someone who is aware of the fact that the source of Alfred's problems is largely the struggle within himself, namely between the person he wants to be and the role he thinks he needs to fulfill, or rather to 'play' in society. Furthermore, because of her status, a woman such as Adele would likely have more opportunities to marry, which is exactly how Schnitzler depicted the events in Adele's life after Alfred left for his trip abroad. This would be a vindication of the father's instincts.

Unlike his depiction of Adele, early in the story Schnitzler depicts Elise as having no one but Alfred. Schnitzler does include an advocate for Elise in the German baron, a figure who ironically was of a higher social status than Alfred. Schnitzler's depiction of the baron is not as Elise's rescuer, but perhaps as a vindicator of Elise's death since he killed Alfred.

Schnitzler does not depict the female protagonist Elise in this work as breaking out of the socially sanctioned roles of the period. He does, however, boldly depict Elise's death as an indirect result of the effects of the socially imposed role expectations influencing Alfred. Schaefer uses the terms 'extreme' and 'desperate deceptions and betrayals' in describing Schnitzler's use of a bourgeois man in a relationship with a lower class woman in this work.[13] In my analysis, I concur with her interpretation. I would go even further by applying this observation to Schnitzler's depiction of most of the characters in this text as they all seem to face irresolvable struggles between social expectations and personal desires. Although the plot of this work primarily depicts the figure Alfred in relation to the women in his life, Schnitzler seems to be portraying

[13] Quoted above on page 30.

Alfred as a symbol of the ramifications of being subjected to these socially sanctioned roles. He depicts Alfred as acting out of desperation and as if he could not find another way out of the situation he was in except to murder Elise. Even the title supports this observation in that Alfred is clearly a murderer, yet he is also murdered by the German baron. *Der Mörder* is clearly a work in which Schnitzler cleverly exhibits his keen awareness of the problems that gender roles and social classes imposed upon the women and men of his society.

CHAPTER III
ELSE IN *FRÄULEIN ELSE*

Schnitzler's novella *Fräulein Else,* published in 1924, is among his most widely known works of prose. The work has received a significant amount of critical attention. The figure Else has been psychoanalyzed, translated, filmed and adapted to the stage. On the one hand, Arthur Schnitzler has been acclaimed for his ability to so effectively communicate the innermost thoughts of a nineteen year old female character. Conversely, not unlike the criticism Gustave Flaubert received for his depiction of Emma Bovary, Schnitzler has as been criticized for taking the liberty to assume that he might be able to come remotely close to accurately characterizing the thoughts of a nineteen year old woman. Regardless of where one positions oneself on this subject, *Fräulein Else* is among Schnitzler's works that have received the most attention. Part of this attention is due to the fact that Schnitzler chose to depict this story using the stream-of-consciousness technique, the very thing about it that often makes it controversial.

Analyzing Schnitzler's Else is a very different task than analyzing either Friederike from *Die Frau des Weisen* or Elise from *Der Mörder*. In *Fraülein Else* he uses interior monologue to flood the reader with the thoughts, feelings, fears, and desires of his figure Else. Information about the figures Friederike and Elise, on the other hand, is gained primarily through Schnitzler's depiction of their interactions with other characters. The selection of these three texts as the subject of this study attests to the increasing intimacy with which Schnitzler approached his female figures. In *Fräulein Else* the interior monologue makes up the majority of the text. There are three major

sections of uninterrupted interior monologue that are comprised of several pages each, in addition to short sections of interior monologue interrupted by conversations.

Before analyzing the work, it is fitting to first summarize the main plot of the work and identify some of the characteristics Schnitzler attributes to his protagonist, those around her, and about their circumstances. Else is a young Viennese woman of nineteen years. She comes from a bourgeois family that includes both parents and an older brother, Rudi. Else's father is a well known attorney and, at least to some extent, the family is able to display itself outwardly in a manner that would be appropriate for a bourgeois family in early twentieth century Vienna. She is apparently a very attractive young woman and is aware of her physical beauty. Throughout the text incidences of men noticing her physical attributes come to her mind. Else is a virgin. She daydreams of having lovers and at times wonders whom she might marry. She is a high-spirited character with a very active and vivid imagination. A degree of playfulness in the personality Schnitzler grants Else is detectable. This is particularly true in the early part of the story.

Schnitzler opens the work with a short conversation between Else, her cousin Paul, and Cissy Mohr, a woman who is also a guest at the Hotel Fratazza, a resort in the Alps where the story is set. The conversation occurs in early evening as Else is leaving the tennis courts after playing with Paul and Cissy. The stream-of-consciousness begins subsequently as Else is walking back to the hotel, and it ceases with her death in her hotel room just after dinnertime the same evening.

The reader soon learns that in addition to Else's spunky side there is a very lonely side to this figure. The loneliness appears to be tightly linked to Else's desire to break

out of the molds of socially sanctioned roles. She sees herself as different. Or at least she wants to be different. She does not want to live the life of a bourgeois wife, like her mother, but she is torn. She wants so badly to depart from these roles, but as a good bourgeois daughter, she feels the responsibility to fulfill a request her parents make of her. One could, as a matter of fact, interpret the central theme of the story as Else's dividedness between fulfilling her own dreams and desires and her feeling of responsibility to fulfill a request that her parents make.

A request comes in the form of a letter from Else's mother delivered to her at a resort, the Hotel Fratazza, in the Alps where Else was invited to stay by her mother's sister and where the story is set. Else receives the letter, which was sent by express telegram, from the porter as she returns to the hotel from the tennis courts and waits to read it until she is in her room. The letter contains the news that her father has gambled away 30,000 gulden that he obtained by misappropriating trust funds belonging to a Dr. Fiala. Dr. Fiala has apparently notified the district attorney of Else's father's actions and the district attorney – who is fond of Else's father – has given him a deadline to restore the 30,000 gulden. This is not the first time Else's father has gotten himself into a mess such as this. In the past he has been able to call upon others who came to his rescue, including family members and even the district attorney himself. But this time those options are not available to him. In fact, the last time Else's father was bailed out by a family member he was required to sign an agreement that he would not make such a request from family again.

Else learns from her mother that her parents had exhausted all options for coming up with the funds by the deadline. And then they received a letter from Else in which she

coincidentally mentioned that she had seen Herr von Dorsday, a friend – who was formerly closer than he is now – of her father. Herr von Dorsday is an older man, probably in his fifties, who is an art dealer, and her mother has information that he has recently sold a painting for around 80,000 gulden. Dorsday had bailed Else's father out before, although it was for the much lesser sum of 8,000 gulden. Also, her mother points out that Else's father once assisted Dorsday in a legal process that saved Dorsday some money. The mother indicates that she and Else's father interpret as a fortunate turn of fate Dorsday's presence at the Hotel Fratazza where Else is staying. They think he is the answer to their dilemma.

True crisis sets in inside Else's mind after reading her mother's request that she solicit the 30,000 gulden from Dorsday. The inner thoughts of Else change drastically after she reads the letter. She struggles to understand how her parents could ask this of her. Over and over she imagines how she would even pose such a request to Dorsday. Everything within her resists asking for the money. She is ashamed to ask him – whom she does not even like – for money. But she feels she *must* do it. The picture painted by her mother if she does not get Dorsday to loan her father the money is a grave one – one of embarrassment and scandal for the family and perhaps prison or even death for Else's father.

Else's thoughts race rampantly through the possible scenarios with intermittent digressions that involve thoughts of Else's own hopes, dreams, and desires or thoughts of other people in her life. Else eventually dresses for dinner and goes down to the hotel lobby. Still uncertain when or if she will approach Dorsday to ask for the 30,000 gulden, she decides to go for a stroll outside the hotel. While she is outside, Dorsday approaches

her and, even though she resists asking for the money with all her might, she begins to relate her father's predicament.

As the conversation continues, Else learns that Dorsday is willing to give her father the money, but that his offer is not without a price. Dorsday agrees to send the funds to Dr. Fiala on behalf of Else's father in Vienna under the condition that Else allow him to gaze at her naked body. Else is disgusted and angered at his request. Schnitzler allows the reader to participate in the internal struggle she faces about whether or not she will grant Dorsday's request. She continues her walk outside as she wrestles with the decision:

> Es ist noch Zeit bis zum Diner. Ein bißchen Spazierengehen und die Sache in Ruhe überlegen. Ich bin ein einsamer alter Mann, haha. Himmlische Luft, wie Champagner. Gar nicht mehr kühl - dreißigtausend . . . dreißigtausend . . . Ich muß mich jetzt sehr hübsch ausnehmen in der weiten Landschaft. Schade, daß keine Leute mehr im Freien sind. Dem Herrn dort am Waldesrand gefalle ich offenbar sehr gut. O, mein Herr, nackt bin ich noch viel schöner, und es kostet einen Spottpreis, dreißigtausend Gulden. Vielleicht bringen Sie Ihre Freunde mit, dann kommt es billiger. Hoffentlich haben Sie lauter hübsche Freunde, hübschere und jüngere als Herr von Dorsday? Kennen Sie Herrn von Dorsday? Ein Schuft ist er - ein klingender Schuft . . .
>
> Also überlegen, überlegen . . . Ein Menschenleben steht auf dem Spiel. Das Leben von Papa. Aber nein, er bringt sich nicht um, er wird sich lieber einsperren lassen. Drei Jahre schwerer Kerker oder fünf. In dieser ewigen Angst lebt er schon fünf oder zehn Jahre . .. Mündelgelder . . . Und Mama geradeso. Und ich doch auch. - Vor wem werde ich mich das nächste Mal nackt ausziehen müssen? Oder bleiben wir der Einfachheit wegen bei Herrn Dorsday? (37-8).

She eventually falls asleep while sitting on a park bench and dreams that she is dead and envisions the details of her own funeral. When she awakes it is approaching eight o'clock in the evening and she is still tormented by Dorsday's request and does not know what to do.

After continuing her outdoor stroll awhile longer, Else's thoughts are interrupted by her cousin Paul, who is searching for her because she was missing at dinner. She claims she has a headache and heads back to her room, but before she makes it upstairs the porter approaches her with yet another telegram that had just arrived. This, the second correspondence from her mother about the grave situation, was very brief, only stressing that it is urgent that she approach Dorsday and stating that the needed sum is now 50,000 gulden instead of 30,000 as was first requested.

Else spends time in her room again contemplating if and how she will solicit Dorsday for the money. It is during this time that she begins to consider suicide as the only way out for her. She plans her death by using the Veronal pills that she has and ultimately decides to first grant Dorsday's request of seeing her naked so that he will have no excuse not to fulfill her request to loan her family the money.

Instead of giving Dorsday a private viewing of her naked body she plans to reveal herself with others present. She undresses in her room and goes downstairs wearing just her coat and shoes. She searches for Dorsday and finds him in the music room. It is there that she opens her coat in front of everyone in the room. Else faints and is carried back to her room and put in her bed. In her bed she gains enough strength to reach for the glass in which she had prepared the Veronal with water. While those attending to her are looking elsewhere, Else drinks the poisoned water. Else dies having managed to fulfill her role in her bourgeois family, albeit at the cost of her own life.

The text abounds with information that can be used to analyze Else, yet the task is not without challenges. Schnitzler depicts Else as somewhat of a complex figure who often vacillates about her feelings and opinions and about the decisions with which she is

faced. The indecisiveness and uncertainty that Schnitzler grants Else sometimes makes it difficult just to follow her thoughts and even more challenging to interpret what Schnitzler aimed at communicating when he shaped this character.

A psychoanalytic analysis of the figure Else is clearly outside the framework of this study. However, it is important to reiterate that other critics have analyzed Else in this light and have 'diagnosed' her as a figure that exhibits a variety of behaviors that can be attributed to psychological disorders. Although it is somewhat dated, Robert O. Weiss' 1968 article "The Psychoses in the Works of Arthur Schnitzler" is an example of such a study in which the description of Else's 'illness' includes some verbiage that is familiar even outside the fields of psychology and psychiatry. Weiss goes as far as to diagnose Else with a "psychotic break" (396). He lists Else's "etiological factors" as "schizoid personality, prepsychotic, insoluble conflicts, and anxiety and guilt neurosis" and describes her "symptomatology" as "incident of exhibitionism, hysteric paralysis, and suicide to escape insoluble conflicts" (397). While the intent of this study is not to make a clinical diagnosis, in my conclusion I will draw from Weiss' diagnosis in describing the effects, as depicted by Schnitzler, of sanctioned roles on the figure Else.

In my analysis I will look for passages within the interior monologue of Else that inform the reader of Schnitzler's depiction of Else's self-image, her perception of other characters and her outlook on life in general. I will also examine relevant passages of dialogue and passages in a letter from Else's mother. The letter in particular is a significant section of text. Schnitzler cleverly uses this 'text-within-a-text' to characterize Else's family with minimal interruption to the interior monologue. Using

this technique also allows him to offer the reader information about Else's family that is minimally filtered through the perspective Schnitzler grants Else.

Even before Schnitzler depicts Else's negative feelings toward her mother as she reads the letter, he depicts Else's perception of her mother as less than favorable through her thoughts. Just after the opening conversation in the work, thoughts of Else's mother come to her as she walks back to the hotel from the tennis courts. Else questions why she is walking so slowly and wonders if the reason is because she fears the letter that is on its way from her mother. Schnitzler depicts Else's prediction that the letter most certainly will not contain good news and her supposition that her mother may even be writing to inform her that she must cut her vacation short and return home to Vienna: "Warum geh' ich so langsam? Fürcht' ich mich am Ende vor Mamas Brief? Nun, Angenehmes wird er wohl nicht enthalten. Expreß! Vielleicht muß ich wieder zurückfahren. O weh" (6). Shortly thereafter Schnitzler turns Else's thoughts to her father. She thinks of how she is concerned about him, then wonders whether he has ever cheated on her mother. Schnitzler clearly portrays Else's opinion that her father has most certainly done so, and that it has happened more than once. Schnitzler then reveals an important characteristic about Else by revealing that Else thinks that her mother is actually quite dumb and that her mother does not understand her at all: "Ach, lieber Papa, du machst mir viel Sorgen. Ob er die Mama einmal betrogen hat? Sicher, öfters. Mama ist ziemlich dumm. Von mir hat sie keine Ahnung" (7). This remark is the first of multiple references to Else's opinion of her mother as rather dense. At times, one gets the sense that Schnitzler intends to depict Else as a figure who abhors everything about her mother and that the mother represents all that Else wishes against for her own life.

In the letter from Else's mother Schnitzler presents the reader with significant information about Else's family. While Schnitzler's depiction of Else's reactions as she reads the letter are equally important, it is fitting to first look at the letter apart from Else's reactions to gain a clearer understanding of Schnitzler's depiction of Else's family. In the greeting of the letter Else's mother addresses her as a dear and good child. One gets the sense that Schnitzler depicts the mother as using these words to indicate that she expects obedience from Else rather than as an affectionate greeting. In the early lines of the letter Schnitzler depicts her mother as apologetic, implying that the mother is fully aware of the uncomfortable position in which her parents are putting her by involving her in this grim situation. Schnitzler emphasizes the mother's conveyance to her daughter that absolutely all other options have been exhausted. Her mother states that they would not be making this request of her except that it is the absolute last resort. He also depicts the mother as telling Else of her own emotional distress by mentioning that she is constantly fighting back the tears. Schnitzler seems to aim at portraying the mother's words about her own emotions as a sort of tactic intended to influence Else to grant the request of her parents. Schnitzler depicts the mother as putting great emphasis on the ruin that will come to the family if the request is not met and a scandal breaks. In my view, this clearly thematizes Schnitzler's view of the Viennese bourgeois life as a façade:

> Mein liebes Kind […] Also nochmals, sei uns nicht böse, mein liebes gutes Kind und sei tausendmal […] Mein liebes Kind, du kannst mir glauben, wie leid es mir tut, daß ich dir in deine schönen Ferialwochen […] mit einer so unangenehmen Nachricht hineinplatze. […] Aber nach reiflicher Überlegung bleibt mir wirklich nichts anderes übrig. Also, kurz und gut, die Sache mit Papa ist akut geworden. Ich weiß mir nicht zu raten, noch zu helfen.[…] Es handelt sich um eine verhältnismäßig lächerliche Summe – dreißigtausend Gulden, […] die in drei Tagen herbeigeschafft sein müssen, sonst ist alles verloren. […] Denk dir, mein geliebtes Kind, daß der Baron Höning,[…] sich heut' früh den Papa hat kommen

> lassen. Du weißt ja, wie der Baron den Papa hochschätzt, ja geradezu liebt. Vor anderthalb Jahren, damals, wie es auch an einem Haar gehangen hat, hat er persönlich mit den Hauptgläubigern gesprochen und die Sache noch im letzten Moment in Ordnung gebracht. Aber diesmal ist absolut nichts zu machen, wenn das Geld nicht beschafft wird. Und abgesehen davon, daß wir alle ruiniert sind, wird es ein Skandal, wie er noch nicht da war. Denk' dir, ein Advokat, ein berühmter Advokat, – der, – nein, ich kann es gar nicht niederschreiben. Ich kämpfe immer mit den Tränen. Du weißt ja, Kind, du bist ja klug, wir waren ja, Gott sei's geklagt, schon ein paar Mal in einer ähnlichen Situation und die Familie hat immer herausgeholfen. Zuletzt hat es sich gar um hundertzwanzigtausend gehandelt. Aber damals hat der Papa einen Revers unterschreiben müssen, daß er niemals wieder an die Verwandten, speziell an den Onkel Bernhard, herantreten wird. […] Der Einzige, an den man eventuell noch denken könnte, wäre der Onkel Viktor, der befindet sich aber unglücklicherweise auf einer Reise zum Nordkap oder nach Schottland […]- und ist absolut unerreichbar, wenigstens für den Moment. An die Kollegen, speziell Dr. Sch., der Papa schon öfter ausgeholfen hat […] ist nicht mehr zu denken, seit er sich wieder verheiratet hat […] (11-15).

Schnitzler makes it appear through the letter that Else's mother may have played a role in rectifying the previous predicaments her father created just as she is playing the significant role this time by authoring the letter to Else.

One could interpret the driving force behind the mother's plea for help as the negative perception to which the family would be subject if a scandal such as this were to become public knowledge. Schnitzler supports that interpretation shortly thereafter by revealing Else's reaction to a separate incident that she recalls just after she finishes reading the letter. The incident that Else recalls at this moment is a festive dinner that her mother prepared for fourteen people on New Year's Day. Schnitzler depicts Else's interpretation of this event as her mother putting on the dinner just for show when the family hardly had any money and that her mother nearly cried when her brother Rudi has just asked for 300 gulden:

> Mama ist wirklich eine Künstlerin. Das Souper am letzten Neujahrstag für vierzehn Personen - unbegreiflich. Aber dafür meine zwei Paar Ballhandschuhe,

> die waren eine Affäre. Und wie der Rudi neulich dreihundert Gulden gebraucht hat, da hat die Mama beinah' geweint (15).

These passages are indicative of Schnitzler's depiction of Else's mother as a woman who felt that she was expected to behave as an appropriate bourgeois wife, regardless of how her husband behaved. Again, in this passage Schnitzler seems to be addressing the façade of bourgeois society.

A bit further in the letter Schnitzler portrays Else's mother as trying to convince Else – or perhaps even to convince herself – that getting a loan for the 30,000 gulden from Dorsday will be a permanent cure for their family. She mentions that Else's father expects to receive payment of around 100,000 for a case that will soon be ending, but in the mean time a loan from Dorsday is vital. Schnitzler depicts the mother as minimizing the request she is making of her daughter, again in a way that seems to be a tactic to push Else to approach Dorsday:

> Und daß mit den dreißigtausend tatsächlich das Schlimmste abgewendet ist, nicht nur für den Moment, sondern, so Gott will, für immer.[…] Denn der Prozeß Erbesheimer, der glänzend steht, trägt dem Papa sicher hunderttausend, aber selbstverständlich kann er gerade in diesem Stadium von den Erbesheimers nichts verlangen. Also, ich bitte dich, Kind, sprich mit Dorsday. Ich versichere dich, es ist nichts dabei. Papa hätte ihm ja einfach telegraphieren können, wir haben es ernstlich überlegt, aber es ist doch etwas ganz anderes, Kind, wenn man mit einem Menschen persönlich spricht (13).

In this passage Schnitzler seems to be depicting the father as a man who is hopelessly addicted to gambling and the mother as denying the reality of her husband's problem. Also significant to note is that the mother's attempt to minimize the difficulty of the task of approaching Dorsday conflicts with her intense apologies in other parts of the letter. Equally contradictory is that, even though Else's father's actions are presented as the singular cause that her mother is forced to make this request of her daughter, Else's

mother still attempts to minimize Else's father's responsibility: "Mein liebes, liebes Kind, mir tut es ja so leid, daß du in deinen jungen Jahren solche Dinge mitmachen mußt, aber glaub' mir, der Papa ist zum geringsten Teil selber daran schuld" (14). This passage serves as further evidence that the mother avoids facing reality when it threatens the fulfillment of her role to appear as a good wife in a good bourgeois family, even to the point of enabling her husband's gambling habit. It appears that Schnitzler perhaps even aims at depicting the mother as attempting to functionalize her daughter to preserve the behaviors of her own generation.

It is noteworthy that throughout much of this text, Schnitzler seems to direct more of Else's anger toward her mother than toward her father. Even in Else's dream that occurs while she sleeps on the park bench Schnitzler portrays Else's perception of her mother in such a negative light. The setting of the dream sequence is Else's own funeral. Schnitzler depicts Else as dreaming that as she lay dead she notices that Dorsday is beckoning someone over to himself. Else realizes that it is her mother coming down the stairs. Her mother goes to Dorsday and kisses his hand and the two of them whisper among themselves. This sickens Else, but she cannot understand what they are saying: "Wem winkt er denn mit dem Taschentuch? Die Mama kommt die Treppe herunter und küßt ihm die Hand. Pfui, pfui. Jetzt flüstern sie miteinander. Ich kann nichts verstehen, weil ich aufgebahrt bin" (43). This passage is a substantial indicator that Schnitzler intends to depict Else's perception of her mother to the likes of Dorsday, at least on some level. One similarity between Dorsday and Else's mother is that they both make requests of her that will cost her her dignity to fulfill. Also significant is that Schnitzler seems to use the dream sequence to inform the reader that Else sees no way out of her situation.

Even in death, she still sees her mother as manipulating. Regardless of what Else does, this cyclical façade of bourgeois life is perpetuated.

In order to understand the social background Schnitzler attributes to Else, it is important to consider passages that shed light on her father and her feelings toward him. Schnitzler's depiction of Else's reaction to certain parts of the mother's letter are early indications that Else sees her father as a man with little emotion. The first example is when Else's mother writes that Else's father was very concerned about having to turn to Else. Her mother indicates that he returned home very distraught after requesting to borrow the 30,000 gulden from two other people and being declined. Schnitzler poignantly portrays Else's as reacting by posing the rhetorical question of whether her father is even capable of being distraught: "Kann Papa überhaupt verzweifelt sein?" (14). Her mother describes this event further saying that one person Else's father asked for help was at one time her father's best friend and that she assumes Else knows to whom she is referring. In response to her mother's words, Schnitzler depicts Else as thinking to herself that her father had too many 'best' friends, yet he had none: "Papa hat so viel beste Freunde gehabt und in Wirklichkeit keinen" (14). This strengthens the interpretation that Schnitzler aimed at portraying Else's opinion of her father as a very detached and superficial man. Similarly to his depiction of Else's feelings toward her mother, Schnitzler seems to portray Else's father – in the opinion of his daughter – as a man who is concerned with outward appearances but lacks substance in the inner self, a quality which Schnitzler's protagonist seems to long for in her life. An additional passage that supports this interpretation comes later in the work as Else thinks of her father's attention as always being focused on something besides her. In her thoughts she

poses the question to her father as to what he would do if she were no longer there. In this passage Schnitzler depicts Else as longing for her father's attention and being lonely because she rarely had any:

> Manchmal im Blick von Papa war eine Ahnung davon, aber ganz flüchtig. Und dann war gleich wieder der Beruf da, und die Sorgen und das Börsenspiel - und wahrscheinlich irgendein Frauenzimmer ganz im geheimen, ›nichts sehr Feines unter uns‹, - und ich war wieder allein. Nun, was tätst du Papa, was tätst du heute, wenn ich nicht da wäre? (47-48).

Throughout the work Schnitzler's depiction of Else's mother and father appears to be less as parents and more as symbols of the façade of bourgeois life.

Another male character that Schnitzler depicts in Else's thoughts quite frequently is Fred, Else's boyfriend back in Vienna. Fred is portrayed as someone Else is seemingly fond of, but is not her ideal choice as a mate. Early in the story Schnitzler depicts Else's thoughts of Fred as someone she likes, but nothing beyond that. She then thinks that perhaps if Fred were classier she might be more interested in him: "Fred ist mir sympathisch, nicht mehr. Vielleicht, wenn er eleganter wäre. Ich bin ja doch ein Snob" (7). Schnitzler later depicts Else's thoughts as wondering to Fred while contemplating her own beauty and realizing that she has no one for whom to look beautiful. She wonders whether she would be happier if Fred were there and concludes that he just isn't for her, but that she would take him if he had money. She then imagines the complications it would cause if she chose to be with Fred and then the man of her dreams – a playboy – were to come along:

> Für wen bin ich schön? Wäre ich froher, wenn Fred hier wäre? Ach Fred ist im Grunde nichts für mich. Kein Filou! Aber ich nähme ihn, wenn er Geld hätte. Und dann käme ein Filou - und das Malheur wäre fertig (20).

In these passages Schnitzler seems to be emphasizing Else's desires to rebel against the bourgeois life of her family. He depicts her as willing to accept Fred if only he had money, which indicates that, like her family, he did not.

Later in the work Schnitzler depicts Else as including Fred in the group of people she blames for the turmoil that persists within her. Her parents, her brother, and Fred are all at fault, she thinks, because no one ever took the time to really find out what was going on inside of her. It was all about the façade and all about superficial things.

> Ihr wart es, könnt ich sagen, Ihr habt mich dazu gemacht, Ihr alle seid Schuld, daß ich so geworden bin, nicht nur Papa und Mama. Auch der Rudi ist schuld und der Fred und alle, alle, weil sich ja niemand um einen kümmert. Ein bißchen Zärtlichkeit, wenn man hübsch aussieht, und ein bißl Besorgtheit, wenn man Fieber hat, und in die Schule schicken sie einen, und zu Hause lernt man Klavier und Französisch, und im Sommer geht man aufs Land und zum Geburtstag kriegt man Geschenke und bei Tisch reden sie über allerlei. Aber was in mir vorgeht und was in mir wühlt und Angst hat, habt ihr euch darum je gekümmert? (47).

In this passage not only does Schnitzler depict Else as incredibly lonely for meaningful relationships within her family, he also portrays her as apparently longing for more emotional intimacy with Fred.

Later in the text he depicts Else's feelings for Fred as deeper than just a casual courtship. This passage appears later in the story when Else is contemplating suicide. She indicates that she has thought for some time that she would die in this manner and that she has discussed it with Fred. Schnitzler is apparently depicting Else's trust in Fred. She continues with the thought that Fred is the only decent person she has ever known in her life and, were it not for his decency, he would have been the one person she would have loved. In this passage Schnitzler is also clearly depicting Else's struggle with her

self-worth. She thinks that she is not suited for a middle-class existence, that she has no talents and it is better anyway if her family just dies out:

> Aber bilden Sie [Dorsday] sich dann um Gottes willen nicht ein, daß Sie, elender Kerl, mich in den Tod getrieben haben. Ich weiß ja schon lange, daß es so mit mir enden wird. Fragen Sie doch nur meinen Freund Fred, ob ich es ihm nicht schon öfters gesagt habe. Fred, das ist nämlich Herr Friedrich Wenkheim, nebstbei der einzige anständige Mensch, den ich in meinem Leben kennengelernt habe. Der einzige, den ich geliebt hätte, wenn er nicht ein gar so anständiger Mensch wäre. Ja, ein so verworfenes Geschöpf bin ich. Bin nicht geschaffen für eine bürgerliche Existenz, und Talent habe ich auch keines. Für unsere Familie wäre es sowieso das Beste, sie stürbe aus. (50)

Although Schnitzler depicts Else as often daydreaming about a playboy that will sweep her off her feet and whisk her away from her bourgeois life, in this passage he seems to aim at depicting Else's feelings about true love and why she cannot experience it. He depicts her as admitting to herself that she really could have loved Fred. One could interpret the obstacle that prevents her from doing so as the façade of the bourgeois life that her parents push upon her. Because she does not fit into that mold, her self-worth is damaged and she does not see herself as worthy of a man as decent as Fred. Additionally, if she were to pursue a life with Fred she runs the risk of perpetuating the cycle and becoming like her mother.

In my view, the most significant secondary characters in this work are Else's mother, her father, and Fred. Ironically, even though more dialogue occurs between Else and Dorsday than any other characters, the figure Dorsday seems to be more or less a consequence of Else's parents' actions. The most dramatic interaction between Else and Dorsday is depicted when she opens her coat in the music room for him to see her naked body. Even this scene, however, seems to mimic the relationship between Else and her parents. By revealing herself to Dorsday in a room full of people she manages to meet

his request, but she does it under her own terms. She grants her parents' request in a similar manner, managing to do what was asked of her, but under conditions that she determines. Schnitzler seems to depict Else, in both cases, as determined to avoid exact compliance with demands that are placed upon her by her parents, by Dorsday, and by her society. In fact, Else's suicide could even be interpreted as a symbolic act to stop the cycle of the façade that her parents are living.

A first reading of this work may result in the reader interpreting Dorsday as the greatest villain. One could even interpret that Schnitzler depicts Else's father as her primary adversary since it was his actions that set the events in motion that ended with Else's death. However, after a closer analysis of the work the evidence seems to point toward Else's mother as being her greatest antagonist. As stated earlier, in most cases Schnitzler seemed to portray Else as harboring more anger toward her mother than toward her father. Furthermore, Schnitzler did not portray Else as seeking her mother's attention. He did, however, on multiple occasions, depict Else as craving her father's attention. Perhaps the most poignant example of this occurs at the end of the work as Else is dying. Schnitzler depicts Else's thoughts of her father in a very childlike way with Else asking her father to hold her hand and fly with her: "Gib mir die Hand, Papa. Wir fliegen zusammen. So schön ist die Welt, wenn man fliegen kann. Küss' mir doch nicht die Hand. Ich bin ja dein Kind, Papa" (81). In this passage Schnitzler seems to depict Else as thinking she finally has the attention from her father that she craved.

Establishing Schnitzler's depiction of Else's preference of her father's attention over her mother's breeds the question of why the figure Else, as Schnitzler constructed her, would desire a close relationship with her father more than with her mother. In my

view Schnitzler answers this question clearly through his depiction of the three characters. First of all, Schnitzler seems to depict more similarities between Else and her father. He depicts Else's father as living on the verge of causing the façade to collapse. By continuing to gamble, he repeatedly risks causing a scandal that would ruin the family's image. One could even interpret that Schnitzler aimed at depicting Else's father's gambling addiction as a result of the pressures he faced in trying to keep up the appearances of the bourgeois lifestyle. In any case, Schnitzler goes to great lengths to depict him as less concerned with the façade than Else's mother. It is the mother who, at any cost, tries to preserve this image. One could interpret that Else identified with this characteristic in her father. Additionally, Schnitzler does not depict Else's father as the one who penned the letter to Else. It is as if Schnitzler aimed at portraying that the father simply could not bring himself to ask this of his daughter, which implies a degree of tenderness and adherence to social conventions of propriety and decency between Else and her father that is not depicted between Else and her mother.

In concluding my analysis of Else, I would be remiss to overlook Weiss's diagnosis of the figure Else. His analysis of Else from a psychoanalytical perspective is certainly merited. As Weiss reported in his diagnosis, Else is clearly a figure that exhibits anxiety and guilt and could even be described as neurotic. However, it is my view that, rather than aiming at presenting Else as a potential psychoanalytical case study, Schnitzler seems to construct the figure Else to portray the desperate condition of his own society. His emphasis seems to be on the lack of stability and hopeless future in the façade that so many individuals in contemporary society attempt to maintain.

In comparing the work to the prior works I analyzed, Schnitzler's depiction of Else certainly stands out as the most dramatic. Regardless of whether one agrees with Schnitzler's boldness in depicting a nineteen-year-old woman using the stream of consciousness technique, it is evident that this narrative perspective is the most effective way to communicate a story of this nature. Schnitzler gives the reader complete access to the thoughts and feelings of his protagonist and depicts the female figure's perspective in this work in much more detail than in the two earlier works. However, in my view, the only possibility of viewing his depiction of Else as a figure who breaks free from sanctioned roles is if one considers her suicide a symbolic act that breaks the generational cycle of commitment to the façade of bourgeois life.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this paper was to analyze selected works of Schnitzler, primarily focusing on the female protagonists, to look for evidence that could support the interpretations of scholars who describe his works as emancipatory with regard to the roles imposed on women by *fin de siècle* society. As a strategy, my first goal was to identify passages in the works that seem to demonstrate Schnitzler's portrayal of the figures as women who faced obstacles that were a result of these sanctioned roles. I then identified the obstacles and stated an opinion on whether the respective figures were depicted as successfully breaking free from the sanctioned roles. Although the results of this analysis differ in detail for each work, in my view these three works certainly support the idea that Schnitzler depicted his female characters as suffering from and trying to break free from sanctioned roles of the period.

In *Die Frau des Weisen* the figure Friederike tries to break out of the mold of a bourgeois wife by acting on the passion she feels for the narrator. Schnitzler interestingly even depicts the husband as 'allowing' Friederike to do this. Such a depiction seems to imply that Schnitzler indeed saw the effects of a patriarchal society and its detrimental effects on women. However, in the end Schnitzler portrays Friederike as not being able to fulfill her sexual desires that were directed at the narrator because of his sudden decision to flee.

In *Der Mörder* Schnitzler's depiction of the female protagonist Elise is much different. Even though one might expect the third-person narrative perspective to be more revealing of both the female and male protagonist, Schnitzler depicts the work through a narrator that speaks from Alfred's point of view, essentially giving Elise no

voice. In this work Schnitzler seems to emphasize the effects of gender and class roles on both the male and female protagonist. Even though he does not focus this work on the internal struggles of the Elise, he appears to depict her plight as an indirect consequence of the effects of sanctioned roles on the figure Alfred.

In *Fräulein Else* Schnitzler seems to emphasize in clear, boldly presented situations the issues women faced as a result of socially sanctioned roles in early twentieth century Vienna. He portrays Else's mind as a battleground between a desperate desire to break free from these roles and a duty to fulfill the role of a good daughter, if only by self-sacrifice. Of the three works analyzed in this thesis, Schnitzler's depiction of Else is by far the most effective at portraying the inner turmoil triggered by the expectations of society on a young woman. This is partially due to his use of the interior monologue technique as the narrative perspective. Even though this work is focused much more heavily on the female protagonist than either of the other works, Schnitzler still manages to subtly address the effects of sanctioned roles on men in the work as well. Unless one interprets Else's suicide as a symbolic break, the figure does not successfully break out of the sanctioned roles that are imposed upon her by society.

In my view, the results of this study support the interpretation that Schnitzler's works of prose serve as useful contributions to direct his readers' attention to the need to emancipate women from the sanctioned roles that existed during his life. Additionally, the results indicate that observations made by Elizabeth G. Ametsbichler and W. E. Yates regarding Schnitzler's dramas indeed apply to his prose. Based on this study, it would be difficult not to credit Schnitzler with thematizing gender issues in the three prose texts analyzed in this thesis, such as "double standards between the sexes" that Yates observed

in Schnitzler's dramas. Ametsbichler observed that one element of the appeal of Schnitzler's dramas is that he has the ability to "capture the essence of human nature and the confused condition of the human soul" and translate it to the stage. Based on this thesis, this observation seems to be true of his ability to pen a work of prose as well. In my view, an author who so boldly exposed the effects of role expectations on women in his prose should be credited as one who, through his writing, identified social constraints that limited women in their freedom to seek self-fulfillment, and who – through his female characters' tragic demise – also alerted this readership to a need for change.

Establishing that the above referenced observations about Schnitzler's dramas appear also to apply to his works of prose raises new questions that could be the subject of subsequent studies. It would be interesting to compare works from both genres to analyze how Schnitzler attempted to create the intensity and emotion in a prose text that would automatically be present in a dramatic performance in the theater. What techniques did he use to evoke feelings in his reader? Were the progression of boldness and increasing intimacy Schnitzler's way of compensating for the absence of the stage in his prose? Additional research would certainly be warranted to explore these and other questions on this topic

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VITA

Michelle L. Webster was born in Bristol, Tennessee on October 2, 1966. Her excitement for the German language began as a teenager while visiting German speaking countries as a singer in a touring choir and orchestra group. She completed a Bachelor of Arts in German at Samford University in 1988. She subsequently furthered her proficiency in German by attending the Goethe Institut in three locations in Germany, Murnau, Staufen, and Berlin, where she ultimately completed the Zentrale Mittelstufenprüfung in 1991. After spending time working as a tour director in both the U.S. and Europe, she settled in Knoxville, Tennessee with her husband and began a career in the banking industry. She was encouraged by an acquaintance who was a professor of German at the University of Tennessee to further her education in German by enrolling in the school's graduate program, where she graduated with an MA in German in 2010. In addition to her fascination with language, she has a passion for helping animals in need and is often involved in bringing stray dogs and cats to rescue.