In 1912 Henry Bataille put a laboratory and a woman scientist on stage and made his play, Les Flambeaux, a hit of the Paris theater season. Aside from these novel elements, the play is constructed from themes familiar to the time: it relates a family drama focusing on the professional bourgeoisie and it obsesses about the New Woman. As historians Linda Clark, Mary Louise Roberts and others have shown, in the Third Republic women challenged traditional gender ideals, and social and legal dictates, by the very fact of their struggles to enter the professions, as well as by direct action pressing for legal and cultural reform. Commercial popular media responded by putting the “New Woman” on stage and in print media for scrutiny and stereotyping in portrayals that only rarely were as subjective and sympathetic as in Les Flambeaux. When women characters were shown involved in professional activities and scientific research, as doctors or as doctor's wives, medical narratives combined these several cultural concerns – medicine, marriage, reproduction and sexuality – in ways that fascinated contemporary audiences and critics. In this article I focus on three of those works: Bataille’s Les Flambeaux, the play Les Mouettes by Paul Adams, and the novel Princesses of Science by Antoinette Huzard. These stories of medical women, that appeared between 1907 and 1912, illustrate how the discourses of the

New Woman intertwined with the construction of social fears regarding medical science: imagining women in the laboratory conjured up an array of social concerns.

Although their numbers were very small before the First World War, medical and scientific women drew much attention at the fin-de-siècle thanks to the accomplishments and determination of pioneer women physicians like Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, Augusta Dejerine-Klumpke, Marie Phisalix-Picot and, in particular, Madeleine Pelletier. These names were among a handful of women who followed Madeleine Brès, who entered the Paris Faculty of Medicine in 1866, into medical faculties in the first three decades of the Third Republic in spite of enormous barriers erected by the educational system.\textsuperscript{5} But what sets Klumpke, Phisalix and Pelletier apart in particular is that they broke another barrier, they entered not only medical practice but also medical research. To enter that world generally required a hospital internship for which students became eligible only after passing a highly competitive examination: Klumpke and Edwards had to fight for access to it. In spite of notable examination results, actual positions in hospitals where they would have access to laboratory space were barred to Klumpke and Edwards and to the other women medical students who immediately followed them. Nonetheless they performed scientific work and, in the case of each of the women listed above, published numerous scientific articles over long and distinguished careers.\textsuperscript{6} France's most famous women scientist of the era was physicist Marie Sklodowska Curie, the Polish immigrant whose access to a laboratory, and whose eventual accession to the professorate was made possible by her marriage to her co-worker, Pierre Curie. Because of the use of X-rays in diagnosis and radium against cancer, the Curies' work was identified with medicine in popular consciousness.\textsuperscript{7}

Curie's very public example demanded recognition that women were capable of original scientific research. Marie and Pierre Curie became media stars even before they won the Nobel Prize in 1903 (with Henri Becquerel). From the beginning of her fame, Marie's gender was a central media issue. Interviewers either gushed or fussed about her performance as a mother and keeper of the

\textsuperscript{5} Clark, \textit{Women and Achievement}, 167, 170-2, 213-220. As Clark points out, an additional barrier to women professionals was constituted by the difficulty of obtaining the education necessary to pass the baccalaureate. See also Mary R. S. Creese, \textit{West European Women in Science, 1800-1900: A Survey of Their Contributions to Research} (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 57-85.

\textsuperscript{6} Creese, \textit{West European Women}, 61-8.

\textsuperscript{7} Of native-born students in science faculties in 1900, 1.27 per cent were women; by 1910 the percentage had risen to 4.82. In the medical schools the comparable figures were, respectively, 2.0 and 3.8 per cent. Mary Jo Nye, \textit{Science in the Provinces Scientific Communities and Provincial Leadership in France, 1860-1930} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 29.
foyer.\textsuperscript{8} Like other New Women Curie became a target of the anti-woman, anti-feminist discourse of the newly organizing nationalist right. The flurry of antagonism surrounding Curie brought together those who elaborated the ideology of the “feminine mystique,” like novelist Marie Louise Antoinette Regnier, with the enemies of medicine such as Léon Daudet (who also counted the world of medicine among the several targets of his attacks on the republican society of the Third Republic). While Daudet led a campaign in the pages of \textit{L’Action Française} that sought to associate Marie Curie with the Dreyfusards, Regnier wrote a long commentary on Curie in \textit{Le Figaro} in which she intimated that emulating Curie would “denature” women \textsuperscript{9} Curie was portrayed as a danger to the gendered socio/cultural order but she was also widely admired and her achievements were the subject of patriotic pride.

Bataille’s \textit{Les Flambeaux} seems clearly inspired by the Curie couple, here channeled by the fictional Bouguets who are portrayed as co-equal scientists searching for a cancer vaccine. The staged laboratory of the first act was said to have been copied in minute detail from Metchnikoff’s laboratory at the Paris Pasteur Institute. It was a sensation. Dr. J. Barfield Adams, visiting Paris from Edinburgh, gushed:

One sees the large and well-lighted laboratories. Everything speaks of scientific research. There are microscopes and other biological instruments placed on spotless tables, and the shelves are laden with bottles of reagents. During pauses in the dialogue one hears the clink of steel on glass, and by an olfactory hallucination one fancies that one smells the faintly acrid odor of chemicals.\textsuperscript{10}

The text calls attention to the laboratory as the center for the Bouguet marriage relationship and domestic life, a replacement for the foyer. Mme Bouguet describes her anxieties about this substitution, noting that her affection for her husband is expressed in “worrying about the lab cultures” rather than providing a “cushion for [his] head.” The lack of a traditional foyer and of its locale for the enactment of traditional femininity is further emphasized in the flowery speech of a male character who says that he yearns for a wife, a “gentle, sweet bouquet in the house.”\textsuperscript{11} The Bouguets’ daughter underscores this anxiety when she described her mother as “not a woman” because she uses her “head as much as her heart.” The daughter insists this is uttered in admiration of her mother, but Mme Bouguet makes it evident in their exchange that she gets the double message. Her anxieties also show through when she writes an article for “the feminist

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Quin2} Quinn, \textit{Marie Curie}, 282-3.
\end{thebibliography}
press” – for a journal that seems to promote the cause of emancipated (integral) feminism. In this scene the text makes an explicit connection (as did the discourse of the right) between the cause of feminism and female scientific achievement. Against the expectations of the editor looking for an affirmation of Mme Bouguet as a full member of the scientific community, Mme Bouguet instead produces an account that the text has previously shown to be false: she makes her husband the lone scientific hero, and herself only his assistant.

After celebrating the laboratory as a place for a new kind of domesticity, a site of scientific research and advancement, the narrative then suggests to some in the audience at least that this might be a dangerous illusion. If the couple’s laboratory replaces the foyer, so too do the acolytes of the laboratory, male and female lab assistants, act as replacement children. The Bouguets turn out to be neglectful parents, in particularly failing to raise their stand-in children morally, as becomes evident when M. Bouguet has a brief affair with one of them. Trying to cover it up because she blames herself, Mme Bouguet unleashes a melodramatic cataclysm of destructive events: one of the laboratory assistants commits suicide, an indirect result of the affair; the laboratory is trashed by other disaffected acolytes; the cancer vaccine, almost ready to save lives is destroyed along with the research notebooks; and ultimately M. Bouguet is killed in a duel. As Dr. Adams described the play’s impression on him, the message was that “home, home life; the chaste and honorable vie à deux, is the true state of earthly happiness.”12 In this way the text worked to satisfy traditionalists in the audience.

I have only this one contemporary appraisal of the play’s view of the New Woman, that of a middle-class Scottish doctor, but the text suggests that other reactions were possible. The text draws attention to how traditional domestic expectations force Mme Bouguet into false positions. She feels pressured to alter her presentation of her own identity. In the article where she was expected to portray herself as an emancipated woman she pushes her husband to the forefront making herself only his assistant; then she takes on the role of subservient spouse as she tries to cover up her husband’s transgressions. Her efforts to conceal the affair, collaborating with her husband to try and maintain his facade as a scientific hero of unimpeachable moral stature, unleashes the series of destructive events. For his part, M. Bouguet’s affair points to another social anxiety: was France giving unwarranted and dangerous power to scientists? M. Bouguet’s character, the text suggests, is altered for the worse by his celebrity; his embrace of the role of celebrity-savant makes him a double seducer who not only takes advantage of a hero-worshiping young woman, but also seeks the attention of the media, attentions that Mme Bouguet has clearly shunned. Thus the Bouguet’s fall from grace centers in large part on another gendered problem:

12 Adams, “The Doctors,” 241
masculine egotism shown to be inflated by a new world of celebrity-making in the print media and by the nation’s love affair with science.

The text makes the gendered social roles and the push-pull of traditional expectations and modern possibilities its central concerns. The couple’s immediate social group is sharply divided between advocates of traditional patriarchy and of feminism: the text questions this division. Before her fall from grace, the representation of Mme Bouguet as woman-scientist and as a stand-in for Marie Curie, clearly violates the sharp separation between the public and private sphere that was so ubiquitous in the nineteenth century’s discourse on gender. In the lives of real women scientists, as in the case of the one imaged here, their spheres of activity “blurred” this line of separation, as Linda Clark has observed in her survey of *Women of Achievement* in the nineteenth century.\(^\text{13}\)

The laboratory as a jointly feminine and masculine space, and also the physical site of a marriage, violates the ways in which domestic life was traditionally envisioned. Nevertheless the text also makes clear that within the marriage Mme Bouguet bears central responsibility for maintaining the moral balance, a role that was deeply embedded in bourgeois concepts of married womanhood and was a key component of the discourse on the separation of spheres. It remains equivocal on exactly where her moral failing lies: in her abandoning the foyer or in her abandoning the laboratory, while it foregrounds the ways in which gendered discourse forces women into such choices. This ambiguity, as well as its sensational use of the laboratory on stage as scenery and as symbol, helps to account for the play’s popularity in 1912. It signaled an opening for a more nuanced and subjective examination of the New Woman quite distinct from the stereotypes of much of contemporary popular narrative. But while it suggests the option of a marriage based on laboratory rather than foyer, it reemphasizes the old ideal of women as the moral leavening in couple and family life. The place women in the laboratory and a focus on the question of morality in the lives of the scientific couple are also prominent concerns in *Les Mouettes* and *Princesses of Science*.

Two years after the first presentation of *Les Flambeaux*, Paris audiences had another example of the scientific marriage to enjoy, in the film version of *Les Mouettes* presented in the cinema in 1914. First presented on stage in 1906, in this Paul Adams play Dr. Kervil and Mme Yvonne Kervil work together in a laboratory.\(^\text{14}\) However Yvonne Kervil is clearly her husband’s assistant. A doctor’s wife, she tends the broths, washes the tubes and keeps his notebooks so that he

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\(^{13}\) Clark, *Women of Achievement*, 2.

can continue to work on a potential life saving “blood restorer,” while caring for patients in their isolated community on the Normandy coast. In contrast to the title of *Les Flambeaux* (“The Blazing Ones”), *Les Mouettes* signals a couple united by the devotion and intense bonds attributed to seagulls.

The doctor’s wife was the subject of much interest in popular culture as well as in professional advice literature. Physicians described their ideal wife as a woman whose dowry size was less important than social skills and connections that would help gather and retain a clientele. She was expected to manage the day-to-day finances, sending bills, writing professional letters and filling out bureaucratic forms.\(^\text{15}\) As Dorinda Outram has argued, the wife was an important link in the intimate patronage system that governed medical practice as well as scientific research; she was valued as “one whose function was seen as companionate activity rather than biological reproduction.”\(^\text{16}\) Indeed in some of the most famous medical marriages of the fin-de-siècle era, both in fact and in fiction, the couples either had but one child (as was the case for the Curies and for the fictional Bouguets) or were childless (as in *Les Mouettes*). Since the doctor’s consulting room inevitably shared space with the family living space, even sometimes using the foyer as the waiting room, the marriage of necessity mixed science and business with traditional feminine roles. *Les Mouettes* draws attention to how another nominally female space, the kitchen, is joined to nominally masculine work as the Kervils’ laboratory is pointedly located adjacent.

In other ways, *Les Mouettes* is a classic fictional exploration of the nineteenth century cult of domesticity and separation of spheres: a wife who in all social and professional functions is a second to her husband, but whose role as moral agent is emphasized, as in *Les Flambeaux*, as central to her identity and cultural place. Professional advice discourse reflected the same notion, asserting that doctors were obliged to marry because a wife was, in the eyes of society, a guarantor of the doctor’s moral and ethical professional behavior.\(^\text{17}\) In *Les Mouettes*, Yvonne’s admiration mirrors to Dr. Kevil a particular image of himself, that of a self-sacrificing, humble country practitioner dedicated to his patients as much as to science, the antithesis of the lionized, public savant represented by M. Bouguet. The Kervils’ idealized scientific coupledom is disrupted when the


\(^{17}\) Dr. P. Reille, “Premier congrès international de médecine professionelle et de déontologie médicale, juin 1900,” *Annales d’hygiène publique*, 3rd series, 44 (1900): 193-257.
modern world intrudes with its temptations of scientific fame and commercial wealth in the form of two emissaries of outside dangers. A pharmaceutical entrepreneur, Chambalot, comes to stay as a paying guest at the chateau (the Kervils are chronically short of money). Another visitor arrives at the same time, Yvonne’s cousin Adrienne, a chic, savvy Parisian widow and society maven. Chambalot convinces Adrienne to join him in an effort to commercially exploit Dr. Kervil’s blood restorer, even though the doctor himself is not convinced of its therapeutic benefits. Adrienne imagines a revived glory for herself in Paris as the future wife of a now famous Dr. Kervil, once Chambalot has convinced Yvonne that it is in the doctor’s best interest, as well as in the best interest of medicine and suffering patients, for the couple to divorce. The Parisian medical world, Chambalot relates, is a commercial and corrupt society where Kevil will need Adrienne’s social skill and contacts to maneuver to success. Blinded by her loyalty to Kervil, and eager to promote his scientific ambitions, Yvonne agrees to this scheme. Kervil, tempted by the vision of greatness and the mutual sexual attraction between him and Adrienne, almost succumbs. About to embrace Adrienne in the foyer, Kervil is brought to his senses when Yvonne comes out of the laboratory, to remind him that his “media are boiling.” He is also shamed by Yvonne’s example of self-sacrifice as she is willing to give up her own happiness in marriage to fulfill his goals. Her example saves him from commercial and sexual immorality.

Les Mouettes reflects a dichotomous view of medical science as at one in the same time full of great promise and great dangers. On the one hand, the savants of medical science were celebrated in popular print. Alongside the nations’ greatest scientific celebrity, Louis Pasteur (whose wife also kept his notebooks), the press reported on the glorious achievements of men like Charles Richet who won the Nobel prize at about the time Les Mouettes was staged. At the same time medicine was much criticized for what was portrayed as its excesses. Newspapers printed stories about practitioners who, in effect, experimented on their patients, doing them more harm than good. Radium and x-ray treatments for cancer and skin diseases brought some successes, but more often horrific mutilation and death; several surgeons were vilified for what was seen as extreme, dangerous and outrageously expensive surgeries. In popular literature, physicians experimented on patients in order to reap the new wealth from corporate pharmaceuticals. The medical profession lamented this state of

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affairs as a “crisis of faith” in science. For their part, media critics took note of a “war ... between the partisans of science and its detractors” in popular culture.

This crisis over medical science can be understood from more than one angle of cultural history and cultural politics. The medical world became a focal point in a larger cultural debate over materialism; more specifically, over the application of scientific reasoning (scientism) to moral questions and social relations – one of the central tenets of Positivism. As Martha Hanna and George Weisz have demonstrated, the questioning of scientism began in educational and intellectual circles in the late empire and early Third Republic. By the early twentieth century, as Hanna describes it, the debate became a cultural war carried out by the defenders of the church and by the nationalist right who discursively attacked the Third Republic as a regime imbued with a materialism responsible for an increasingly amoral society. For the rightist enemies of the Republic, science, envisioned as a way of thinking and living, was causing as much domestic moral disorder as the New Woman. The conceits of this discourse spread within popular culture and commercial fictions.

A parallel analysis exists within the literary criticism of medical fiction. Lawrence Rothfield argues that the anti-materialism found in medical modernism developed in dialectic with the medical realism that is typified in the medical stories of Gustave Flaubert, Jules Claretie, Emile Zola, and Alphonse Daudet. Characters such as Emma Bovary (perhaps literature’s greatest failure as a doctor’s wife) are represented in their works as “embodied persons,” while questions of “truth-value” are resolved by revealing in each character the “pathological versus the normal” through medical knowledge. The agent of knowledge is the benevolent medical practitioner or some other character who stands in for him, who brings science into the narrative as rational, neutral, and absolute knowledge that can reveal otherwise hidden truths regarding the moral

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worth and personal orientations of each problematized character. Accepting this system of knowledge and morality, medical realism holds out hope for a “professional utopia” where medical knowledge can create “beneficial social action.” A reaction to medical realism – a “counter discourse” – can be found in the anti-materialism of medical modernism where the truth-value of medical science is called into question along with the medical authority of its practitioners.  

That drama about medical practice should be the vehicle to construct and convey fears regarding scientism was decidedly over determined in the social, the political and the emotional. Many prominent medical men, such as Emile Littré and his co-author Charles Robin, had since the Second Empire at least been strongly associated with materialism. In the early Third Republic universal male suffrage brought many doctors into public office, replacing the local notables and creating a popular association between medicine and the new regime. Moreover, in a long enduring fashion that has made the medical drama central to modernism, stories of illness have become narratives of a drive to fight death, bringing together highly emotional, personal and familiar life episodes with the modern fascination and anxieties regarding technology. In contrast to medical realism that celebrated both the truth-revealing power of materialist thought and the authority of medicine, in medical modernism the narrative shifts to a confrontation between the truths of science and the truths of metaphysical forces. Thus the modern medical narrative creates tension between, on one hand, the dictates and determinism of medical science that in modernity is both valued and distrusted, with, on the other hand, stories of the triumph of spirit, love, character or faith over the diseased body and medical prognoses. It’s a story that endures to the present.

Les Mouettes and Les Flambeaux – along with other notable examples of medical modernism from with they seemed derived such as Paul Bourget’s Le Disciple and George Ohnet’s Dr. Rameau (both published in 1889) – associate gender with their creation of discrete categories of materialist as opposed to metaphysical ways of knowing and acting in the world. For contemporary observers, fictional men of science like Kervil and Bouguet, in their excessive faith in scientism, had fallen prey to “égoïsme” or “Niecheanism,” defined as

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unguided and misplaced confidence in their own individual judgment and values.\textsuperscript{26} By the 1920s this discourse had won a great deal of ground in intellectual and literary life as well as in popular culture. Critics saw in the cultural production of the pre-war years a laudable attack medical realism and particular hailed Dr. Rameau and Le Disciple as constructive antidotes to medical realism. As one critic wrote, modern medical fiction “accentuated the realm of the transcendent as opposed to the materialism and determinism, and general allegiance to science to be found in Emile Zola and Alphonse Daudet.”\textsuperscript{27}

In Les Mouettes, as in Le Disciple and Dr. Rameau, fictional physicians are represented as dangers not only to their patients, but also to their family members who are shown to suffer at the hands of an amoral patriarchy. Wives, daughters and nieces endure psychic and bodily pain as objects of the amoral application of scientific concepts brought into family life. Ultimately their largely silent suffering – and in Yvonne’s case, the gesture of selflessness – transforms the scientists who come to realize that the moral order must be determined from religious and philosophical tenets. Even as these women remain agnostic, they accept a religiously based morality. As Michelle Perot has written, “domesticity played the role of the hidden God.”\textsuperscript{28} A decade and a half later, the New Woman had transformed the way women figured in medical modernism. Unlike the suffering figures of the two 1889 novels, Yvonne Kervil has a far more active and nuanced place in Les Mouettes, she is both a symbol and at the same time an agent of a secularized religious morality. Critics saw in the moral contrast between the Kervils, created by the image of feminine moral strength and masculine temptation, a “Christ-like morality opposed to the Nietzschean ethos, the force of sacrifice against the force of egotism.”\textsuperscript{29} Yvonne’s story reflects what has been written regarding the so-called feminist novels of the era; that women are moved into a crucial role in the modern world as femininity is shown to bring devotional, affective and humanistic values into modernity.\textsuperscript{30} Yvonne departs from traditional views of womanhood in another way. As she works in the

\textsuperscript{26} DeJust, Le Médecin, 65.
\textsuperscript{29} DeJust, Le Médecin, 63.
laboratory and organizes the clientele, she confirms a place in medicine as practice and as science for women, albeit one that is clearly delimited. The doctor's wife had become a crucial part of the profession of medicine, providing, in essence, the office staff at a time when most doctors' incomes were insufficient to hire assistance of any kind. Among the wealthy physician families of the haute bourgeoisie, the wife could dispense with the office and laboratory duties, but nevertheless provided social the connections that enabled a rising star of the medical-research world to develop a scientific circle of supporters and disciples.

One real example of an elite medical wife was Marie Desjardin who conducted a salon for scientists and intellectuals during the early Third Republic. She divorced Paul Fontaine and married the elite doctor, Abel Desjardins, whose career she fostered. In turn, Desjardins fostered the medical career of her stepdaughter, Jacqueline Fontaine, one of the first women to actually receive an internship, at the Paris Hotel Dieu.\(^{31}\) Desjardins belonged to that class of elite doctors who were called, with varying degrees of derision and admiration, “princes of science.”\(^{32}\) This medical elite played an important role in the history of women doctors in France as their interventions were crucial in admittance of the small number of French women who were able to enter the Paris Faculty of Medicine in the first decades of the Third Republic.\(^{33}\)

The fascination of media with women doctors like Jacqueline Fontaine who were few in number – 2.0 percent of all medical students at the faculties in 1900 and 3.8 per cent in 1910 – stands in marked contrast with a general lack of interest in two other groups of women in medicine who numbered in the thousands: midwives (sages-femmes) and nurses (including both Catholic sisters and the secular profession that was in the process of replacing them).\(^{34}\) Cultural obsessions over women practicing as doctors reflects the widespread notion, fostered by physicians themselves, that working as a doctor, that is as a médecin, required a particular kind of toughness of body and of mind that was a quality to be found only in certain males, and certainly not in females – an assumption that

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34 There were around 14,000 licensed midwives (sages-femmes) around 1900, and hundreds of others were practicing but unlicensed. On nurses, see Katrin Schultheiss, *Bodies and Souls: Politics and the Professionalization of Nursing in France 1880-1922* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).
ignored the medical work of midwives and nurses.\textsuperscript{35} In entering a profession so closely associated with masculinity, indeed with brotherhood and male collegiality, women also entered a domain of men who were overwhelmingly responsible for generating the discourse about female bodily and mental inferiority.\textsuperscript{36} As late as 1920, medical discourse insisted that in order to survive, first in medical school and later in the profession, women had to become “virilized.” However this same author firmly stated that, in contrast to the early Third Republic where women doctors had been the subject of “satire and ridicule,” by 1920 they had to be taken seriously, if for no other reason than that the carnage of the war made them indispensable to the health of the nation.\textsuperscript{37} The 1907 novel \textit{Princesses of Science} describes the state of women doctors in between these two eras, in transition from novelty to social necessity.

In \textit{Princesses of Science}, the main character, Dr. Thérèse Herlinge, belongs to the medical elite, as the daughter of an elite doctor and a mother who presides over a salon. Like the real woman, Dr. Jacqueline Fontaine described above, she is an intern at the Hôtel Dieu. Antoinette Huzard, who wrote under the pseudonym of Colette Yver, was a prolific producer of novels that echoed the debate over the New Woman.\textsuperscript{38} She first wrote about a woman physician in \textit{Les Cervelines} of 1902. Like that novel, \textit{Princesses de Sciences} presents a panorama of the lives of real women medical students and doctors studying and working in Paris in the early years of the twentieth century. Secondary characters include several women doctors who have taken different career paths. One of these is a woman of foreign origin who marries a French doctor and decides to work as his assistant; two others work independently but in practices confined to women and children’s health. Reflecting the reality of women at the Faculties, where foreign-born women were the first student welcomed there and where they continued to make up a large contingent of women students in the early twentieth century, Thérèse’s closest student-friend is a young Russian woman.\textsuperscript{39} The novel also presents a panorama of the “crisis of faith in medicine” at the turn of the century with its focus on the contrast between the elite world of scientific medicine, the world of laboratory, scientific meetings and publications and what is portrayed as

\begin{itemize}
\item[M. Hildreth, “The Therapeutic Perspective of Post-Pasteurian Medicine,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine, 2010. For the discourse against women doctors, see Pigeard-Micault, “Histoire de l’entrée.”
\item On masculinity and the medical profession, see Robert A. Nye, \textit{Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
\item Mary Jo Nye, \textit{Science in the provinces}, 29.
\end{itemize}
the more humble world of ordinary practitioners making a career caring for patients.

At the Hôtel-Dieu, Huzard describes Herlinge as like a “true lady of the manor” presiding in a “modern palace.” “Like a Chatelaine of old, she is adorned in her particular clothes, but instead embroidered robes she wears unbleached linen with her intern’s apron wrapped around her waist.”

There she has her own laboratory, which like the staged laboratory in Les Flambeau is given a meticulous description in the text. Here another medical student, Fernand Guéméné who has long admired Thérèse as, both “a woman” and “a scientist,” proposes marriage “smell of iodine.” Huzard juxtaposes detailed descriptions of the “bouillons” (culture media), the dust, the piles of scientific papers, the microscopic and slides, the human tissues in formaldehyde, and the white rats of Thérèse’s laboratory to the discussions of romantic and conjugal love that ensue.

At first Fernand insists she must give up her career, but affected by her dismay and his own guilt, he relents. Once married, they enter separately into medical practice. Fernand, whose family was too poor to support him as an intern, is consistently out shown at scientific gatherings by Thérèse who continues to make great strides in her laboratory work and her rounds at the hospital. On the other hand, Fernand is shown to be in many ways the superior practitioner. In the first months of practice, when Thérèse sees patients, Huzard writes, she “sees only the sickness” not “the sick person.” Her examinations seem often to be a “simulation of an autopsy” ("simulacre d'autopsie").

Huzard underscores the fears about modern medicine being imbued with materialism that runs through medical modernism, emphasizing this conceit by portraying it through the behavior of a woman doctor. In contrast, Huzard shows the scientifically inferior Fernand to be the better practitioner, with an exemplary bedside manner and true devotion to his patients. Here Huzard reproduces a conceit that can be found widely in scientific and medical family drama of the era from Le Disciple to Roger Martin du Gard’s Les Thibaults, that science could be dangerous to human life unless it should be tempered by feminine values and morality. In a marked departure from the male-authored narratives, Huzard has those “feminine” values represented by a male. Symbolizing human, devotional values within scientific medicine, Fernand’s example eventually transforms his wife’s professional behavior; it feminizes her doctoring. She becomes more kind and gentle with her patients and less obsessed with their bodies as objects of study. Huzard has her

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40 Yver [Huzard] Princesses, 5.
41 Yver [Huzard], Princesses, 6. Liquids in beakers were still used at the time as microbial cultures.
subject transformed in other ways as well, as she describes Thérèse's awakened sexuality as a counterpoint to her braininess. When Fernand reveals his passion, the “cerebral virgin” is transformed into “a tender young woman... a veil was lifted off another life, one of charm and vitality against which her previous life seems sterile.” Moreover, against the usual stereotypes about New Women giving birth, voiced by several characters in the novel, when Thérèse becomes pregnant she gives birth to a robust baby boy rather than the expected outcome of a stillborn or defective child.

Huzard describes Thérèse as deliriously happy in the marriage where she can be both a “doctresse” (a woman physician) and Mme Guéméné. But there is also another Mme Guéméné, whose spectral existence haunts the marriage, the long dead widow of Fernand’s uncle, Dr. Eugène Guéméné. Fernand scarcely knew his aunt, but his long-mourning uncle describes her virtues as he expresses his doubts about his nephew’s marriage. He tells Fernand that to be happy in marriage “il faut lier ses vies,” rather than lead the rather separate lives of Fernand and Thérèse. The other Mme Guéméné (Eugène’s wife) is described in terms that reflect professional discourse on the doctor’s wife and also clearly reflects the ideology of “familial feminism,” that, as Karen Offen has described, posited women as equals to men in spirit and brain, but occupying separate if equally important spheres. Huzard portrays her version of the doctor’s wife as not only a skilled manager, comforter and home decorator, but also well-educated and intellectual, exercising “an intense interior life.” Dr. Eugène states that he was “not ashamed” to admit that in cultural and intellectual matters, his wife was the “leader” and he the “follower.”

The image of married bourgeois bliss draws Fernand’s attention to the dismal conditions of his own home, where the servants are cheating the couple, the unsupervised cook serves awful food, and he suspects their child is ill cared for by the nursemaid. Indeed the nurse transmits syphilis to the baby who sickens and dies. This tragedy moves Thérèse to give up her independent practice, her appointment at the hospital, and along with it her glorious laboratory. Instead, she and Fernand decide that she will follow the example of other women doctors, she will enter into joint practice with Fernand, working out of the home, taking care of gynecology and pediatrics. Fernand rewards her by planning a new laboratory to be built in the corner of their kitchen. Effectively she abandons her life as Dr. Thérèse Herlinge – skilled surgeon and cutting edge researcher – for a new identity: Mme and doctresse Guéméné, the ultimate doctor’s wife, a conflation of roles that Huzard underscores by her use of the gendered term

43 Yver [Huzard], Princesses, 22, 96.
44 Offen, “Depopulation Nationalism, and Feminism.”
45 Yver [Huzard], Princesses 41.
46 Yver [Huzard], Princesses 43.
doctresse to describe women doctors practicing in this delimited fashion. Thérèse's new role fits comfortably within the dictates of familial feminism while it assuages the concerns raised in medical modernism.

These texts of medical modernism suppose women to be capable in the laboratory, a space that was in these years new and unfamiliar, celebrated, but also anxiety-ridden. The texts make explicit that women have a place there, among the beakers and broths, among the chemicals preserving human tissue. By fashioning a connection between laboratory and scientific marriage as these texts so pointedly do, in one way they obliterate traditionally gendered spheres of activity. However, they also imagine that particular moral issues are at stake for the scientific couple, reflecting discursive threads that are found in popular medical narrative and in the discourses surrounding the New Women. The laboratory might indeed be a space open to both sexes, but like medical practice – understood as afflicted by the dangerous scientism of modern masculinity – it demanded domestication and a particular kind of feminization. Returned to his laboratory next to the kitchen, with Yvonne at his side, Dr. Kervil is morally safe. Dr. Thérèse is also rescued from materialism, first when her bedside manner is made moral by her husband's example, and finally when her medical practice and her laboratory are re-situated to the home and placed under her husband's charge. The conclusion makes clear that Fernand's anti-materialist bedside manner, that reflects feminine values, makes him a better doctor and does not diminish his masculinity. Rather the text justifies his assumption of medical patriarchy in his relationship with his wife at the narrative's end precisely by emphasizing the "feminine" affective and devotional aspects of his interactions with patients. Fernand emerges as the paragon of medical morality because of his fusion of male and female virtues. The overly masculinized Thérèse needs his continued tutelage.

The images of scientific marital partnership in these texts posit a new basis for married life, one that de-emphasizes the reproductive couple and instead presents the model of the scientific couple working for the good of humanity. However it is a couple whose moral fiber is fragile; it might well be a danger to society unless the New Women of the laboratory retain their traditional role as the cultural carriers of a secularized morality working to tame the masculine egotism of scientific materialism.