

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
FINE HALL

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

February 28, 1935

Dear Doctor Flexner:

I have been thinking over the question about Miss Noether which is implied in the letter from Mrs. Manning. I think that her way of putting the case to Mr. Weaver was unfortunate. If she had said that efforts were being made to raise a fund which would enable Bryn Mawr to keep Miss Noether permanently, it is quite possible that Weaver's response would have been different. I am inclined to think that even now if the matter were put before him in that form it might help. Indeed, if there were some way by which you could let him know that such efforts are being made it might be useful.

It would be possible to say to Weaver (1) that Miss Noether's unique position in the world as the only woman mathematician of the first rank should ultimately make it possible to raise the necessary funds; and (2) that all of us would be prepared to do anything that we could in the way of persuading possible donors to help in this matter.

The actual action agreed upon by the professors of the Institute with regard to a grant is to set aside \$1500 to be used as a grant for Miss Noether in the year 1935-36 in case other means of support should fail. This proposal was agreed to (1) in recognition of the fact that Miss Noether has been conducting a seminar last year and this, without compensation, and (2) in view of our appreciation of her intrinsic worth. It is my personal opinion that it would be legitimate to use this money so as to help Bryn Mawr to keep the \$1700 which has thus far been raised toward a permanent fund.

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I am inclined to think that the view of our group towards further commitments would be something like this: that we should be glad to see further grants made during a period in which an effort was being made to place her permanently at Bryn Mawr or elsewhere; moreover, that in saying this we should be conscious of the possibility that this might become a permanent commitment on the part of the Institute. There is no doubt that, apart from the uniqueness of her position as a woman mathematician, she is quite obviously one of the most important scientists who have been displaced by the events in Germany. Therefore even a permanent commitment could be nothing but creditable to the Institute.

In saying all this, I am conscious that we have already gone pretty far in the way of finding places for the displaced German mathematicians.

Yours sincerely,

O.V.

Oswald Veblen

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March 1

P.S. It may be that it would be desirable to discuss some scheme by which we would share with Bryn Mawr in the support of Miss Noether, and thereby assure the continuance of the present arrangement, under which she makes a real contribution to the work of the Institute. Perhaps it would be desirable for me to come in and discuss this with you a little more in detail. I feel sure that if something like this were in prospect, it would be a sufficient basis for the continuance of the Rockefeller Foundation grant for at least a year or two longer.

O.V.