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Abstract

Whether in war, occupation or peacekeeping, whenever foreign soldiers are in contact with the local population, and in particular with local women, some of these contacts are intimate. Between 1942 and 1945, US soldiers fathered more than 22,000 children in Britain, and during the first decade of post-war US presence in West Germany more than 37,000 children were fathered by American occupation soldiers. Many of these children were raised in their mothers' families, not knowing about their biological roots and often suffering stigmatisation and discrimination. The question of how these children were treated is discussed in the context of wider social and political debates about national and individual identity. Furthermore, the effect on the children of living outside the normal boundaries of family and nation is discussed.

I.

For many US soldiers, the Second World War began on British soil, when they entered the country after January 1942 to prepare for the opening of a Second Front in Western Europe. Two and a half years would pass until, on D-Day, 6 June 1944, Allied troops would land in Normandy; these two and a half years amounted to little less than an occupation of Great Britain by American GIs.[1]

When the recruits finally engaged in war in Europe, most of them did not know what to expect. In particular, few would have guessed that US engagement in Europe

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[1] George Orwell, in December 1943, commented in *The Tribune* that it was difficult to go anywhere in London without feeling that Britain was an 'occupied territory'. For details of American GIs in Britain, see David. J. Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain 1942–1945* (London: HarperCollins, 1996).

would not end with the war itself. For many GIs, the relatively short period of active combat was followed by an indefinite period of a 'second occupation': this time of the former enemy Germany. Both occupations – different though they were – brought US soldiers into close contact with the local populations, and in both cases thousands of children born of GI fathers to local mothers were left behind. Starting from an analysis of the contacts between GIs and local women in both countries, this paper aims to compare the experiences of the children born of these occupations and to investigate how attitudes towards them fitted into the shifting paradigms about national and individual identity and family life in the early post-war years. The focal points will be public and governmental debates and responses to children born of those two occupations. Particular attention will be paid to discussions concerning the one group singled out in both countries: children of biracial parentage. By comparing policy responses to what was perceived in both Britain and Germany as a 'problem' group, new insights into the post-war normative discourses on key issues such as family values, multi-racial society and human rights are gained.

With the United States' entry into the Second World War in December 1941, plans for a US presence in Europe quickly took shape. After a steady military build up between January and October 1942, US troop strength reached a temporary maximum of 228,000 men. Following troop movements to North Africa, resulting in a decline in numbers to about 105,000 in early 1943,[2] numbers soared again in preparation of the opening of the Second Front in June 1944, when troop numbers reached a maximum of almost 1.7 million soldiers on the eve of the D-Day landings.[3] Throughout the war, more than three million US soldiers were stationed in Great Britain temporarily. 'Overpaid, over-fed, over-sexed and over here' was a common perception of GIs in Britain.[4] Their situation was comparable to that of other occupation troops stationed in non-combat or non-conflict roles. Disciplining an army in waiting was a significant challenge. Boredom, homesickness, insecurity about the impending combat actions and dissatisfaction about the often substandard living and housing conditions all added up to a potent mixture of discontent. In contrast to combat situations, where troops generally regard obedience as essential for their own safety, soldiers in waiting were inclined to see the necessity to obey their military commanders in a different light.[5] Therefore, discipline in the barracks and beyond was far more difficult to achieve, particularly when in close proximity to the local civilian population.[6] This is true for any occupation force stationed away from

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[2] William B. Breuen, *Operation Torch: The Allied Gamble to Invade North Africa* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985).

[3] United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States. The Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1941–1943), also published as http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?id=FRUS.FRUS194143 (last visited 25 Feb. 2010).

[4] This characterisation was popularised by the British comedian Tommy Trinder. The American GIs retaliated by calling their British hosts 'underpaid, undersexed and under Eisenhower'.

[5] Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle* (New York: Free Press, 1985), ch. 1.

[6] J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors. Reflections on Men in Battle*, 2nd edn (New York: Bison Books, 1970), 51.

military action, and it was certainly also true for GIs in wartime Britain as it was true for US soldiers stationed as occupation and support troops in post–war Germany.[7]

What was more, despite the frequently emphasised 'special relationship' between the United States and Great Britain, mutual perceptions moved in a grey zone of ignorance and indifference, informed largely by prejudices and stereotypes. More specifically, the coexistence of GIs and the British local population was influenced by the particular background of this distinct cohort of soldiers. They were children of the great depression, and this prolonged economic crisis had been the formative experience of the majority of the recruits stationed in Britain. About 60 per cent of all American personnel serving during the Second World War had been born between 1918 and 1927. This meant that their entire youth had been shaped by the hardship of the dire economic situation of the depression. For many the career as a soldier was the first secure employment and for the young recruits military service held the promise of a better life and, ironically, the promise of a better future.[8] While such promises rarely became reality in the short term, the positive expectations often contrasted sharply with the wartime experiences of the British civilian population, and in particular the British women on the home front. Wartime Britain from 1940 was a bombed out and blacked out country. Everyday life was dominated by war work and war-induced disruptions and, above all, rationing.[9]

A significant factor facilitating casual contact was the great mobility of the British population. Compulsory military service, in force since 1939, meant that by D-Day 5 million people had been conscripted into the services, 4.5 million of whom were men. This was the approximately 30 per cent of the male population.[10] Population mobility was also influenced by evacuation measures in numerically significant ways. Although not even the government had exact figures about the evacuations through private institutions, universities, colleges, businesses, charities and others, numbers were significant and estimates of around 3.5 million evacuees seem reasonable.[11] Many of these evacuees were mothers with children, or children without their mothers being evacuated from the cities into the countryside. The third important group of inner-British migrants were young, frequently single, women who moved to do war work in the centres of war-related industries.[12]

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[7] Juliet Gardiner, *Over Here. The GIs in Wartime Britain* (London: Collins and Brown, 1992); Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans. Culture, Gender and Foreign Relations 1945–1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

[8] John Modell and Duane Steffey, 'Waging War and Marriage: Military Service and Family Formation 1940–1950', *Journal of Family History*, 13, 1 (1988), 195–218, esp. 196–7.

[9] Ministry of Information, ed., *Home Front Handbook 1945* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (hereafter HMSO), 1945; reprinted 2005); Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then. A History of Everyday Life During the Second World War* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1971), 419–21 and 470–81.

[10] W. K. Hancock and M. M. Gowing, *British War Economy* (London: HMSO, 1949), 351–2, available at http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/UN/UK/UK-Civil-WarEcon (last visited 28 Oct. 2010).

[11] Richard Morris Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London: HMSO, 1950), chapter VII, Appendix II, 543–9.

[12] Penny Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War* (London: Routledge, 1989).

The long-term effects of the war with regard to emancipation and equality in gender relations brought about by the more prominent role of women in the workplace have rightly been questioned.[13] However, compulsory national service for women between 19 and 24 years during the second half of the war undoubtedly had a number of consequences of importance in our context. During the war, the number of women in paid employment rose from about 5 million to around 6.7 million.[14] More important still were the change in circumstances and the qualitative change in the personal experiences of this highly mobile new workforce. Even before the outbreak of the war the majority of young British women had been in paid employment, but they had generally lived at home.[15] With the beginning of national service and large-scale war work the patterns changed dramatically, with many women living away from home, in hostels[16] or other accommodation outside the reach of parental control.[17] The monotony of the long working days in the factories was broken mainly by cinema, dances or the attention of the locally stationed soldiers. Without doubt, the Mass Observation summary of the adjusted daily routines was accurate for many:

Many of these girls [aged sixteen to eighteen] today are leading more or less adult lives; they work in factories and offices, doing jobs with much responsibility. As a corollary to this new responsibility they demand the right to live adult lives in their spare time.[18]

This right naturally also included the freedom to organise one's spare time with its choices of social contacts and in particular the freedom to choose whom to meet when and under which conditions.[19] In view of the shortage of British men caused by conscription, this also included the freedom to meet GIs.

But not all women who regularly met GIs were single; relationships involving married women were also frequent, if less public and less publicised. These liaisons have to be understood in the context of wartime pressures on married women, especially of those whose husbands were in active service away from home. The husbands' absence, paired with greater independence from their parental home and enhanced by the war-induced shortage of other distractions, together with rationing and other hardships, increased the GIs' attractiveness to those women.[20] The image of the 'good-time girl', a perception of female promiscuity on the part of disloyal,

[13] Ibid. See also, Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

[14] Hancock and Gowing, *British War Economy*, 352.

[15] Selina Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family in England, 1918–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), esp. chapters 1 and 8.

[16] Sandra T. Dawson, 'Busy and Bored: The Politics of Work and Leisure for Women Workers in Second World War British Government Hostels', *Twentieth Century History*, 21, 1 (2010), 29–49.

[17] Summerfield, *Reconstructing*, ch. 6.

[18] FR 1635, 'Women in Public Houses', March 1943, and FR 1835, 'Behaviour of Women in Public Houses', June 1943, Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex.

[19] Claire Langhamer, *Women's Leisure in England, 1920–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), ch. 4.

[20] Claire Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth Century England', *The Historical Journal*, 19, 1 (1997), 146–60.

selfish, pleasure-seeking women, became an increasingly common stereotype. This would later readily be transferred onto the children born out of casual relationships between local girls and GIs.[21]

Among the US soldiers stationed in Britain through the last three war years were approximately 130,000 African-Americans serving within a segregated military.[22] Without discussing in detail the intense debates in Great Britain and the United States that accompanied the stationing of segregated US troops, some key factors and circumstances of significance for the fate of Children Born of War and Occupation need to be mentioned here.[23] In Great Britain, segregation was initially not dealt with as a 'racial problem' as such. This was not because the British population or the British political leadership were any more enlightened with regard to racial questions.[24] The relatively small number of non-white people living in Britain meant that the question of demarcation of different ethnic groups had not arisen as virulently as in the United States. This changed drastically when politicians saw themselves confronted with the prospect of stationing US troops that contained a significant minority of non-white soldiers. The British response to this scenario was ambivalent. On the one hand, a direct transferral of American segregation to Britain was rejected, and the implementation of such policies was refused by members of the British government and the Foreign Office alike.[25] On the other hand, officially sanctioned 'whispering campaigns' and warnings about the dangers of venereal disease transmitted through intimate relations with black soldiers indicate that the British government, too, viewed interracial sexual relationships between black troops and white British women with reservations.[26]

The local civilian population was similarly ambivalent in its attitude towards black soldiers. Frequently, the British were reluctant to adopt US segregation patterns in their own conduct. Segregation that would prevent interracial mixing for leisure-time activities such as cinema, dancing, or simply casual contacts on the streets and in public transport was seen as unacceptable by most British. Moreover, the arrogance and intolerance readily displayed by white GIs vis-à-vis their black colleagues were met with incomprehension. It led not only to tension between black and white soldiers, but also to misunderstandings between white British civilians and white

[21] Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identify and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 71–106.

[22] Many children of African-American descent still use the term 'Afro-American' or 'Afro-German', and it is commonly used in the literature. However, throughout this paper, the term 'African-American' is used to refer to biracial children of African descent.

[23] See also Reynolds, *Rich Relations*, ch. 14.

[24] See, for example, Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack: the Cultural Policies of Race and Nation*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1992).

[25] Bolero Combined Committee (London), 12 Aug. 1942, CO 876/14, Commonwealth Office Records, The National Archives, London (hereafter TNA).

[26] British American Liaison Board, progress report, 26 May 1944, CO 876/14, TNA. Graham Smith, *When Jim Crow Met John Bull: Black American Soldiers in World War II Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1987), 188–93.

GIs.[27] Yet, despite this generally more tolerant attitude, prejudices existed.[28] The main difference between US and British views was that preconceptions in Britain were not purely racial, but linked to class and social status, the more prominent yardsticks used in Britain to demark borders between different sections of society. In his study of colour prejudice in Britain, Anthony Richmond concludes that even before the war, the conception of a 'Negro as a person of low social status and doubtful moral habits' was widespread.[29] Sociologist Kenneth Little confirms that antipathy against coloured people was largely based on their perceived inferior social status.[30]

As a direct consequence, the perception prevailed that women most likely to entertain relations with African–American GIs were less educated and of lower classes, whose morality was similarly questionable.[31] It is important to stress, therefore, that the comparatively tolerant acceptance of interracial mixing was limited to contacts in public, and that it did not extend to the private sphere, let alone to intimate relations. Such contacts between African–American GIs and white British women were condemned no less vehemently by the British than by the Americans.[32]

For local women a relationship with a black GI carried the risk of social ostracism, and many shunned association or regular contacts. Consequently, many African–Americans resorted to payment for sex.[33] This had two significant consequences: first, the prejudices regarding the morality of black GIs were reinforced; and second, the propaganda of the dangers of sexual relations with black GIs and the risk of venereal diseases gained credibility. The disapproving attitude towards intimate relations between white British women and black GIs increased throughout the war and had severe consequences for the children born of these relationships. Judging that an apple would never fall far from the tree, mixed-race children were readily associated with stereotypes about morality, too.

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[27] The conflicts are well documented in reports of soldiers and officers. See, for example, a report on http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/stories/96/a1921196.shtml (last visited 26 Oct. 10). The personal impressions are confirmed by popular and academic studies. See D. Reynolds, 'The Churchill Government and the Black American Troops in Britain During World War II', *Transactions of the Royal Society (Fifth Series)*, 35 (1985), 113–33; Christopher G. Thorne, 'Britain and the Black G.I.s: Racial Issues and Anglo-American Relations in 1942', in Christopher G. Thorne, ed., *Border Crossings. Studies in International History* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1988), 259–74; Phillip McGuire, ed., *Taps for a Jim Crow Army: Letters from Black Soldiers in World War II* (Santa Barbara and Oxford: ABC-Clio, 1983). A brief summary on the basis of newly accessible archival sources is B. Fenton, 'Wartime GIs Went on Rampage of Rape and Murder', *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 April 2006, available at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1516599/Wartime-GIs-went-on-rampage-of-rape-and-murder (last visited 26 Oct. 2010).

[28] An interesting account of this is found in Miss P. Arnold, diary 88/3/1, Imperial War Museum.

[29] Anthony Richmond, *Colour Prejudice in Britain: A Study of West Indian Workers in Liverpool 1941–1951* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1954), 20. See also John Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain*, 3rd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), ch. 3.

[30] Kenneth L. Little, 'The Psychological Background of White-Coloured Contacts in Britain', *The Sociological Review*, 35 (1943), 12–28, here 14, 18.

[31] See Rose, *Which People's War*, 254.

[32] Smith, *When Jim Crow*, 203–4.

[33] Reynolds, *Rich Relations*, 220–37.

There are no reliable figures of the number of British GI-children born during and after the Second World War. It is estimated that there were at least 22,000 children, of whom around 1,700 were of African-American descent.[34] The situation of white and mixed-race GI-children differed drastically. Thousands of previously unmarried British women, who became mothers of white GI-children, could eventually follow the fathers of these children to the United States as 'war brides'.[35] They often married before or after the birth of their children. According to statistics of the US Immigration and Naturalization Office between July 1941 and June 1950, 37,879 British women (and 472 British children) immigrated to the United States as 'war brides' and 'war children'.[36]

White children born of relations of married mothers and GIs were often integrated into their mothers' family and some men accepted the offspring as their own. The children were adopted by the husband, in many cases did not even know about their biological background and grew up in 'normal' nuclear families. Although many of them suffered from stigmatisation as a result of negative stereotyping as children of the 'good-time girls', for many of the white children of the occupation discrimination was intermittent and subtle.[37] As first-person accounts of mixed-race children indicate, their situation was significantly more difficult.[38] As was to be expected, most mixed-race children lived in those parts of England with the highest concentration of US forces comprising black soldiers, in particular in the counties of Gloucestershire, Cornwall, Hampshire, Somerset, Suffolk and Lancashire. The US military did not encourage or support marriages between African-American GIs and British women. The attitude retrospectively expressed by General William G. Weaver, who since September 1942 as Chief of Staff and as Field Deputy Commanding General in the Supply Services had been directly concerned with race issues, may well have been a reflection of the more general mood among the white military command:

God created different races of mankind because he meant it. Our Lord Jesus Christ preached the same tenet, the grounds for which were that such unions would make the blood of offspring impure. It is a biological and historical fact that racial mongrelization results in the progeny acquiring the bad habits of both sides with very few good attributes of either.[39]

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[34] Credible estimates of the number of GI-children are given in George Padmore to Walter White, 29 April 1947 and enclosed memo of 24 April, in NAACP papers, II/A, box 63I: 'US Army-Brown Babies'.

[35] Elfrieda Berthiaume Shukert and Barbara Smith Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1988).

[36] *Immigration and Naturalisation Service: Annual Report 1949*, Table 9A and *Annual Report 1950*, Table 9A, Suitland, MD: Washington National Records Center. See also N. H. Carrier and J. R. Jeffrey, eds., *External Migration: A Study of the Available Statistics, 1815–1950* (London: HMSO, 1953), 40ff.

[37] Pamela Winfield, *Bye Bye Baby: The Story of the Children the GI's Left Behind* (London: HMSO, 1992), 53–67.

[38] Ibid., 93–107. Kate Watson-Smyth, 'GI Babies Abandoned During Second World War Reunite to Trace their Unknown Fathers', *The Independent*, 8 July 2000; Eve-Ann Prentice, 'No Peace for GI Babies', *The Times*, 24 Dec. 2002; Brenda Gayle Plummer, 'Brown Babies: Race Gender and Policy after World War II', in Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed., *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights and Foreign Affairs 1945–1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 67–92.

[39] William G. Weaver, *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Bros, 1958), 365.

Decisions about marriages lay with the local US (white) commanding officers, and it was an open secret that they generally disapproved of mixed-race relationships.[40] Also, although no general laws existed that prohibited mixed-race marriages in the United States, *de facto*, such marriages were forbidden in many federal states, and they were not recognised as valid even if legally contracted abroad.

In the case of married mothers, integrating a 'brown baby' into the family was much more difficult, as the provenance of the child was clearly visible. The children could not hide or be hidden, and therefore the mothers' husbands were often reluctant to adopt them. Married mothers frequently had to pay the price of giving up their illegitimate mixed-race children in order to safeguard their existing family. The situation of young single mothers of the so-called 'brown babies' was seldom easier.[41] A decision to bring up a child as a single parent in wartime and early post-war Britain meant financial hardship and social ostracisation.[42] If the marginalisation of singleness was exacerbated by a mixed-race child, mothers often saw institutional care or adoption as the best option for their child and for themselves. As one child recalled, the mothers were 'shunned by the town as soon as the news of their pregnancies leaked out and when they gave birth to mixed-race children, they were forced to give them up for adoption as there was no support from their families, the Government or the United States Army'.[43] This account echoed the warnings that many African-Americans, especially within the 'League of Coloured Peoples', had articulated openly already in the 1940s when asking whether it would be possible to provide equal opportunities for these children in a society that was almost exclusively white. Harry Moody of the 'League', in an article in *The World's Children* summarised the issue:

When what public opinion regards as a taint of illegitimacy is added to the disadvantage of mixed race, the chances of the child having a fair opportunity for development and service are much reduced.[44]

For children who were growing up in children's homes, this was only a temporary arrangement, and in the second half of the 1940s efforts to find a long-term solution were intensified. Proposals to arrange adoptions, already aired in the immediate post-war period, were now discussed with a much greater sense of urgency. Some US decision makers saw the problem as an exclusively British one. As one politician expressed, 'brown babies' were seen as 'the offspring of the scum of the British Isles'.[45] Even though such verbal lapses were the exception, these children were

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[40] Ormus Davenport, 'US Race Prejudice Dooms 1000 British Babies', *Reynolds News*, 9 Feb. 1947.

[41] The term 'brown babies', while problematic, is used in this paper, as it is still the term used widely by the biracial children of GIs (both of African and South-American descent) themselves.

[42] Katherine Holden, *The Shadow of Marriage: Singleness in England 1914–1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

[43] Ann Evans in Kate Watson-Smyth, 'GI Babies Abandoned'.

[44] Harold Moody, *The World's Children*, March 1946, 44, cited in http://www.channel4.com/history/ microsites/U/untold/programs/babies/page2.html (last visited 27 Feb. 2010).

[45] John E. Rankin, *Congressional Record* (House), 23 April 1947, vol.83, part 3, 3861.

clearly perceived as a British problem, and the proposal of a general transatlantic adoption initiative did not find many supporters in the higher political echelons. The theoretical possibility that GI-children could stay with their fathers in the United States was a rare occurrence in reality.

When ideas about adoption resurfaced in the latter half of the 1940s, many considerations evolved around the experiences of one particular children's home in Somerset, Holnicote House in Minehead. After requisitioning by the Ministry of Health, the Land Agent of The National Trust, the owner of the property, reported that members of Somerset County Council were visiting the property 'aiming at occupation . . . in March 1944 . . . with the prospect of 40 children and 15 others'.[46] Figures about the number of occupants varied, but it appears that between 1944 and 1951, when what was commonly believed and reported as being an orphanage was closed, between fifty-five and ninety children and adult carers resided at Holnicote House, the children being mostly mixed-race children of GIs who had been stationed at Taunton.[47]

Towards the end of the war, the county of Somerset had made the decision to take all 'brown babies' known to the county authorities into care, irrespective of whether the mothers were single or married.[48] From later recollections of the affected children it appears that most had in fact been abandoned by their mothers, driven by the shame they felt about the children having been born out of wedlock. The decisive force behind the policies across the whole county, and particularly with regard to Holnicote House, was Celia Bangham, Superintendent Health Visitor responsible for the county's children.[49] Her efforts, not only visible in her supervision of Holnicote House, but more importantly evident in her attempts to work towards a transatlantic adoption of the mixed-race children of Somerset, received significant feedback in the United States. In December 1947, *Newsweek* reported in an article 'Brown Tiny Tims' about British 'brown babies' who were raised in children's homes such as Holnicote, a theme taken up in the summer of 1948 by *Life* publishing an article on mixed-race children in Somerset.[50] The reporter remarked that British authorities were 'considering offers of adoption received from US Negro families'. Pointing out that the US military declined to support the children although 'it has paid out $9million for broken palm trees, soil damage and even miscarriages among English sheep unnerved by American artillery fire', the article appealed to the readers' sense of duty to come to the rescue.[51] The report generated considerable interest among African-American couples willing to adopt. In fact, the outcome of the appeal confirms the results of research into the complex policies of post-war

[46] Extract from archival record held by HF Holidays Ltd., the organisation that subsequently leased the property.

[47] Information from the National Trust.

[48] Records about the Home, kept at Somerset Record Office, C/CHI/23, are still closed.

[49] Minutes of a meeting with the Home Secretary, 13 Dec. 1945, FO 371/51617, AN 3/3/45, Foreign Office Records, TNA.

[50] 'The Babies They Left Behind', *Life*, 23 Aug. 1948, 41–43.

[51] Ibid., 41.

US transnational adoption, namely that Americans were encouraged 'in their actions as a sentimentalised version of US foreign policy, a political obligation as well as a personal act of rescue'.[52]

Many of the experiences of adopted GI-children in Britain and in transnational adoptions mirrored those of other adopted children in the early post-war period. In this context it is important to remember that even after adoption had been given a legal status in 1926,[53] it was regularly perceived as a side issue compared with other aspects of family life or child welfare.[54] Despite increasing numbers of adoptions after 1926, the psychological effects of not living with one's birth parents received little attention, as did the fact that for many children adoption was the beginning of a lifelong search for identity.[55] Accounts of children born of war, whether from GI-children or others fathered by foreign soldiers in various conflict and post-conflict situations, confirm almost unanimously that this search for their own identity was one of the defining features of their lives.[56]

Although undoubtedly identity is a significant issue for the majority of adopted children or adults,[57] it was even more virulent for mixed-race children. In spite of their often good experiences in their immediate family surroundings, among school friends and acquaintances, many 'brown babies' suffered from isolation and identity crises.[58] They continually found themselves reminded of their origins and the fact that they visually differed from the homogeneous white surroundings for many led to a constant feeling of 'otherness', of being different and of 'not belonging'.[59] As one GI-child put it: 'I did not only feel different but was obviously made to feel different by the normal evil children.'[60] This otherness also served as a permanent reminder of the children's illegitimacy, a circumstance which – during the 1950s and 1960s – was still regarded as unacceptable.

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[52] Jordanna Bailkin, 'The Postcolonial Family: West African Children, Private Fostering and the British State', *Journal of Modern History*, 81, 1 (2009), 87–121, here 95.

[53] Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, Adoption of Children Act, 1926, House of Commons Debates, 7 April 1927, vol. 204, c2237.

[54] Harry Hendrick, *Child Welfare: Historical Dimensions, Contemporary Debate* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2003), 133–70; Jenny Keating, *A Child for Keeps: the History of Adoption in England, 1918–1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), especially chapters 1 and 7.

[55] Jayne Schooler, *Searching for a Past: The Adopted Adult's Unique Process of Finding Identity* (Colorado Springs: Pinon Press, 1995).

[56] Ingvill C. Mochmann, Sabine Lee and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, eds., *Historical Social Research Special Focus Issue: Children Born of War: Second World War and Beyond*, *Historical Social Research*, 34, 3 (2009).

[57] David M. Brodzinsky, Marshall D. Schechter and Robin Marantz Henig, *Being Adopted: The Lifelong Search for Self* (New York: Anchor, 1992).

[58] Winfield, *Bye Bye Baby*, 93–107.

[59] Hazel Carby, in the 2006 Dean's Lecture at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, recalls her own childhood experiences as a (non-adopted) half-caste and powerfully describes the feeling of 'otherness' in what she refers of British racialised society. Hazel B. Carby, 'Brown Babies: The Birth of Britain as a Racialized State, 1943–1948', 2 Nov. 2006, http://www.radcliffe.edu/print/events/calendar_2006carby.htm (last visited 10 May 2010).

[60] Robbie W. commenting on his childhood in Winfield, *Bye Bye Baby*, 98.

II.

Like wartime Britain, post-war Germany was faced with a sizeable presence of US troops and in 1945 around 1.6 million GIs were stationed on German soil. The number quickly decreased, and between mid-1947 and the early 1950s the number of US soldiers levelled at around 135,000, before it increased again in response to the Korean War and growing cold war tensions, leading to a maximum of around 360,000 soldiers.[61] In contrast to Great Britain, however, Germany was a defeated country that had surrendered unconditionally. It was viewed by US personnel, at least initially, as an enemy and not as a partner; conversely, the Americans were regarded less as liberators than as enemies. This, at least at first, affected the treatment of civilians by the occupying troops. As early as June 1944, a Combined Chiefs of Staff Directive to General Eisenhower made clear that the fraternisation of Allied troops with German civil servants and with the civilian population was to be prevented.[62] This was followed, on 12 September 1944, the day after US troops entered Germany, by orders from Eisenhower describing non-fraternisation as the prevention of 'friendly, familiar, or intimate contacts with Germans'.[63] In January 1945, this was further explained in the directive 'Special Orders for German-American Relations'.[64]

At least three reasons underpinned the non-fraternisation order. First, security and peacekeeping concerns were a core issue. This is evident in the short film made for the United States War Department, entitled *Your Job in Germany*, and aimed at GIs stationed in Germany during the post-war occupation period. It was written by Theodor Geissel, better known to the general public under his pen name Dr Seuss. The film, an important component of the soldiers' training, warned them against fraternisation with the Germans who are portrayed as untrustworthy.[65] Reminding the audience of Germany's history of aggression from Bismarck to Hitler, the film argued that the blinding cultural heritage had led previous enemies to fraternise, thereby allowing a resurgence of German militarism. This was to be prevented in future. In other words: greater distance from the civilian population of the former

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[61] Memo, Hqs, ETOUSA, for Gen Eisenhower, sub: Strength of the U.S. Forces, 30 April 45, in USFET SGS 320.3/2. See also Earl F. Ziemke, *The US Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944–1946*, Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army (1990); the American occupation of post-war Germany has been scrutinised beyond the purely military in detail elsewhere. See, for instance, Klaus Dietmar Henke, *Die amerikanische Besatzung Deutschlands* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1995); James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943–1954* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[62] Joseph R. Starr, *Fraternisation with the Germans in World War II*, Office of the Chief Historian, US European Command, Planning for the Occupation of Germany, Occupation Forces in Europe Series, 1945–46 (Frankfurt: U.S. European Command, 1947).

[63] 'Policy, Relationship Between Allied Occupying Troops and Inhabitants of Germany', 12 Sept. 1944, Appendix to letter from Eisenhower to Commanding Generals, National Archives of College Park (hereafter NACP), Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (hereafter SHAEF), Record Group (hereafter RG) 331, file 091–4.

[64] Headquarters, Twelfth Army Group, 'Special Orders for German-American Relations' and accompanying letter to 'John Jones' (no date), File: 250.1–1, Box 12, G1 Decimal file 1944–1945, Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, RG 331 (SHAEF), NACP.

[65] See http://www.realmilitaryflix.com/public/464.cfm (last visited 31 Jan. 2010).

enemy was to guarantee lasting peace.[66] A second aspect was most clearly visible in the detailed provisions contained in the (in)famous directive JCS1067, the US occupation directive predominantly designed to reduce any remaining German power and to destroy Germany's capability to wage war by complete or partial deindustrialisation.[67] One key part of this occupation strategy was the re-education of the Germans. Non-fraternisation was one way of showing German civilians that they had been part of an aggressive National Socialist system which made it impossible for an occupation power to treat the population in anything other than a distanced manner. Third, and of considerable significance, was the consideration of the domestic impact of any US occupation policy in Germany. The non-fraternisation directive served to assure the American public that Germany, after its unconditional surrender, was held at arm's length.

However, soon after the end of hostilities in Europe, and despite directives to the contrary, American and British papers published photographs and reports which suggested extensive contacts of a friendly nature between occupation forces and the local civilian population. This caused indignation abroad and the reporting, subsequently, was strictly censored.[68]

These early reports demonstrated what was confirmed by anecdotal evidence of accounts of GIs and local civilians, namely that the fraternisation prohibition was only adhered to reluctantly and certainly far from consistently, even in the early post-war months. Due to the circumstances on the ground, therefore, the Allied command began relaxing the restrictions, firstly, on 8 June 1945 with regard to dealings with children, and soon after in July 1945 with regard to casual contacts with German adults in public. In October 1945, the non-fraternisation rules were abolished with two important exceptions. GIs were still neither permitted to live with Germans nor to marry a German.[69]

German–American romantic liaisons were observed with suspicion. The women in question were portrayed as a particular 'type', and the image of German *Fräuleins* willing to engage in intimate relationships with GIs soon became a demonising stereotype. Judy Barden, an English-born journalist writing for the *New York Sun*, presented to her American readership an image of German women that bordered on complete condemnation.[70] According to Barden, low-cut necklines were matched

[66] Another example is an occupation booklet of 1945 titled 'Don't Be a Sucker in Germany', http://www.3ad.com/history/wwll/feature.pages/occupation.booklet.htm (last visited 06 May 2010). Distributed to troops in May 1945, this fifteen-page booklet was the 12th Army Group's basic primer for GIs as occupiers. One section on 'Women' included: 'German women have been trained to seduce you. Is it worth a knife in the back?'

[67] Department of State, ed., *Foreign Relations of the United States*, *1945*, vol. 3, European Advisory Commission, Austria, Germany (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1968), 484.

[68] Leo Taub, 'History of Military Censorship in the European Theater of Operations, World War II, 1941–1945', in *Records of the Assistant Chief of Staff*, G-2, European Theater of Operations, US Army, RG 498, NACP.

[69] Johannes Kleinschmidt, '"German Fräuleins" – Heiraten zwischen amerikanischen Soldaten und Deutschen in der Besatzungszeit 1945–1949', *Frauen in der einen Welt*, 4, 2 (1992), 42–58.

[70] Report by Judy Barden cited in 'The Good (Looking) Germans', *Newsweek*, 25, 28 May 1945, 64.

by even lower morals, and the women were portrayed as willing to trade 'candy bars and cigarettes for their souls'.[71] The British military commander, Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, similarly complained that it appeared as though the German girls were practising organised striptease in order to break the Allied will to uphold the fraternisation ban.[72] In contrast to the allegedly experienced and clever German *Fräuleins*, the GIs were portrayed as the often naive, young homesick soldiers, who became victims to the seduction of the German girls. In contrast to British 'good-time girls' whose main transgressions were perceived to be selfish disloyalty, the Americans labelled their German equivalents more as dangerous to the point of being parasitic. However, GIs themselves judged differently, thereby confirming that the impression and presentation of the GIs as 'oversexed, over-fed, over-paid and over here' in post-war Germany, were not merely accidental attributes conjured out of thin air. As one GI put it poignantly, he and his mates judged the fraternisation ban as 'against human nature', and he stressed their own willingness to enjoy their encounters with the German girls.[73]

As in wartime Britain, the peculiarities of demographics in post-war Germany and the political and economic circumstances of the time had a significant role to play in the development of friendly relations. In Germany, too, women had filled the places the men had left vacant. They took over the roles of providers with the added responsibilities, and at the same time they enjoyed the freedoms to go with this new role, not least because they increasingly worked and lived away from the parental home.[74] As a result of the war, in 1946 women between aged 20 and 30 years outnumbered men in that age bracket by 167 to 100. Similarly, for every 100 men aged between 30 and 40 years, there were 151 women.[75] This suggests that young well-mannered men of a particular age were attractive for German women, no matter what their nationality.

Not all sexual encounters were voluntary. Equally, not all of them were forced, and often the boundary between the two was far from clear. Numerous women used their bodies as bargaining chips. Sex paid for in goods or money was common, and providing this kind of service was viewed by many women as part of their struggle for survival. It was not forced upon them by the soldiers but by circumstances. However,

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[71] Judy Barden, 'Candy-Bar Romance–Women of Germany', in Arthur Settel, ed., *This is Germany* (New York: William Sloane, 1950), 161–76; Ray Tucker citied in Philip H. Bucknell, 'Plan Reported Studied to Send Wives Abroad', *Stars and Stripes*, Paris, 16 July 1945.

[72] 'Officers Oppose Fraternizing Ban', *New York Times*, 25 June 1945, 2.

[73] Percy Knauth, 'Fraternisation: The Word Takes on a Brand-New Meaning in Germany', *Life*, 2 July 1945, 26. On the GIs' reputation in Europe, see 'You Don't Know What You Want', *Time*, 8 Oct. 1945, 30–1; (Serviceman's Name Withheld) to *Time*, 12 Nov. 1945, 6; Toni Howard, 'The Idle GI and Liberated France are Mighty Tired of Each Other', *Newsweek*, 19 Nov. 1945, 56–7.

[74] The role of women in National Socialist Germany is very complex and has been subject to thorough debates. For an overview, see Christina Herkommer, *Frauen in Nationalsozialismus: Opfer oder Täterinnen? Eine Kontroverse der Frauenforschung im Spiegel feministischer Theoriebildung und der allgemeinen historischen Aufarbeitung* (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2005).

[75] 'Zunahme der weiblichen Bevölkerung; Stand 29.10.1946', Länderrat des amerikanischen Besatzungsgebietes: Memorandum über die soziale Lage in der US-Zone, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (hereafter BAK): Handakte Preller, 21, 965.

towards the end of the war, the number of reported rapes also rose dramatically, from thirty-one cases in February 1945 to 402 in March and 501 in April of that year.[76] While the numbers were significantly below those reported for the same crime committed by the Red Army,[77] they were grounds for concern among the US military command,[78] not least because it was assumed that the quote of reported rapes was only a fraction of the actual offences committed.[79]

The number of children born as a result of relationships between German women and occupation soldiers, consensual or exploitative, was significant. A survey in 1955 reported that 66,730 illegitimate children fathered by occupation soldiers had been born to German women in post-war Germany. Of these, approximately 37,000 had American fathers, and an estimated 4,000 children were of African-American descent.[80] A brief look at the statistics is important to understand why occupation children in West Germany were perceived primarily as an American-German issue, although three occupying powers were stationed in the area that was to become the Federal Republic. Until the mid 1950s, around 55 per cent of children of the occupation had American fathers, 15 per cent French, 13 per cent British, and 5 per cent Russian, with 12 per cent of fathers appearing in the statistics remaining unidentified.[81] While this number can at least in part be accounted for by the statistical density of occupation soldiers, a second observable fact is less easy to explain. Contrary to expectations, the number of children born to local women and occupation soldiers did not decline after the currency reform and the end of the so-called hunger years – in fact it rose significantly. Moreover, this number rose particularly strongly for

[76] Starr, *Fraternisation*, 81–82. See also, Ann Elisabeth Pfau, *Miss Your Lovin. GI, Gender and Domesticity in WWII*, available at http://www.gutenberg-e.org/pfau/chapter3.html (last visited 28 Oct. 2010), ch. 3, 22ff.

[77] Compare, for example, Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History for the Soviet Occupation Zone 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 69–140, esp. 113–115; and Atina Grossmann, 'A Questions of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers', in Robert G. Moeller, ed., *West Germany Under Construction: Politics, Society and Culture in the Adenauer Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 33–52.

[78] Starr, *Fraternisation*, 83–4.

[79] Robert Lilly, *Taken by Force: Rape and American GIs in Europe During World War II* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). See also John Willoughby, 'The Sexual Behavior of American GIs During the Early Years of the Occupation of Germany', *Journal of Military History*, 62, 1 (1998), 155–74.

[80] Harold Zink, *The United States in Germany, 1944–1955* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1957), 137–8.

[81] The figures are vague. The *Statistisches Bundesamt* specifies a number of 68,000 children of Allied soldiers who were born in the three Western zones and West Berlin between 1945 and 1955 (Sandra Dassler, 'Verschwiegene Eltern', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 Jan. 2006, 3). This is likely to be a conservative figure. More recent estimates, based on statistics compiled by Kai Grieg, which are widely regarded as reliable, assume a number closer to 96,000 children of American soldiers alone. (Kai Grieg, 'The War Children of the World', in *War and Children Identity Project (WCIP)* (Bergen, 2001), 8–9. As is now known from many personal accounts of GI-children, parents and relatives often agreed to maintain silence about the circumstances of conception and the identity of the biological father (see Winfield, *Bye Bye Baby*, chapters 1, 2, 5). This explains why not all children born of occupation soldiers appeared in the statistics. For details, see also BAK: B153/342, 'Uneheliche Kinder von Besatzungsangehörigen', 5 (no. 323).

American occupation soldiers of any racial background, so that the proportion of children conceived of American fathers in 1953–4 rose to around 75–80 per cent.[82] This phenomenon led the Germans to remark, rather sarcastically, that in case of another American combat engagement in Europe, the United States would not have to send their soldiers, but merely some uniforms.[83]

These largely negative images of the women who had had intimate relations with US soldiers were as pronounced within Germany as in the United States, and they were projected onto the children.[84] They were seen as children of the enemy,[85] and their mothers, by choosing a relationship with a GI were perceived as traitors to their German home, possibly to their German husbands and to the prevailing morality of female obedience that had been preached by the National Socialist regime.[86] Therefore, by implication, the children were tainted.

The directives prohibiting marriages between German women and US soldiers were not revoked until December 1946, more than a year after the end of the fraternisation ban. This meant that during the first 19 months of the occupation regime, when the majority of German-American relationships were formed, marriage was impossible. The US military government was unequivocal about responsibilities for children born to local German women, by negating, in principle, any claim for alimony in the case of a soldier fathering a child.[87] After it had become possible for GIs, under certain circumstances, to marry their German girl friends from December 1946 onwards, several thousands of couples got married and thousands of women followed their husbands to the United States.[88] Although marriage statistics as such are not accessible, immigration records show that until June 1950 14,175 German GI-brides and 750 children of members of the US Armed Forces had emigrated to

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[82] See also Luise Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder: Die unehelichen Kinder ausländischer Soldaten mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mischlinge* (Munich: Wilhelm Steinbach, 1954); Waldemar Oelrich, 'Die unehelichen Besatzungskinder der Jahrgänge 1945 bis 1954 in Baden-Württemberg', *Statistische Monatshefte Baden-Württemberg*, 2 (1956), 38–9.

[83] Hans Habe, *Our Love Affair with Germany* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1953), 10, cited in Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 94.

[84] Annete Brauerhoch, 'Fräuleins und GIs: Besonderheiten einer historischen Situation', *ForschungsForum Paderborn*, http://kw.uni-paderborn.de/fileadmin/mw/Brauerhoch/downloads/FF-Brauerhoch.pdf (last visited 8 Jan. 2010).

[85] This has been investigated specifically for Austria in Ingrid Bauer, 'The GI War Bride – Place Holder for the Absent? (De)constructing a Stereotype of Post-World War II Austrian History, 1945–55', *Homme: Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft*, 7, 1 (1996), 107–21.

[86] Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, Family and Nazi Politics* (London: Saint Martin's Press, 1986). See also Brauerhoch, *Fräuleins*.

[87] Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 95.

[88] Exact figures of the number of marriages do not exist. Joachim Kleinschmidt estimates that between 12,000 and 13,000 couples got married and around 20,000 women emigrated as war brides. Johannes Kleinschmidt, 'Amerikaner und Deutsche in der Besatzungszeit – Beziehungen und Probleme', in Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg, Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, ed., *Besatzer – Helfer – Vorbilder, Amerikanische Politik und deutscher Alltag in Württemberg-Baden 1945 bis 1949* (Baden-Württemberg: LpB, 1996), 35–54. American immigration statistics confirm this order of magnitude of marriages and emigration.

the United States. In addition, 1,862 German women had travelled to the United States between 1947 and 1949 as fiancées.[89]

Many tens of thousands of women, however, did not have this option, either because the American father of their child had already been moved elsewhere, because he may not have been granted his officer's permission to marry or because he could not or did not want to take up his paternal responsibility for other reasons. Military rules and regulations facilitated a decision against mother and child.

Moreover, the peculiarities of German laws concerning paternity and social responsibility for children born out of wedlock complicated the situation for the occupation children and their mothers. Illegitimate children were the responsibility of the mother and her family, but the mother was not the legal guardian. Guardianship lay with the state or – in the case of married mothers – with the mother's husband. He became the child's legal father irrespective of biological paternity unless he or the district attorney raised questions of such paternity, as was frequently the case with mixed-race children.[90] During the post-war years fathers were required to support their children financially until they had reached the age of 16 years, irrespective of whether they were married to the child's mother. Members of the US forces, both military and civilian personnel, were excluded from this law.[91] Only after the establishment of the Federal Republic in 1949 was the situation partially revised. The United States passed a law on 11 August 1950 that extended German jurisdiction to members of the Allied forces. But the law contained an important exception: that of cases dealing with the establishment of paternity and alimony claims of children of the occupation! Even after the two German states, for all intents and purposes, had regained sovereignty in 1955 and German women could try to claim alimony for their children, the deliveries of claims were conditional on either the soldier in question having accepted paternity or a US court having made a ruling to this effect.[92] Even in cases where a father attempted to provide for mother and children, complicated and contradictory laws meant that GIs were frequently prevented from doing so. Ironically, in most cases it was impossible for the soldiers to adopt their own children in order to pave the way for providing for them. US military courts were only permitted to pass judgement in case of a criminal offence: civilian claims had to be dealt with by German courts; these courts, however, did not have jurisdiction over US soldiers, and GIs were not allowed to appear before them. Therefore, they did not have any legal way of legitimising their paternity and to gain sole or shared

[89] *Immigration and Naturalisation Service: Annual Report 1949*, table 9A and *Annual Report 1950*, table 9A, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland.

[90] Sybille Buske, *Fräulein Mutter und ihr Bastard. Eine Geschichte der Unehelichkeit in Deutschland 1900–1970* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004), 195–210.

[91] See relevant remarks in the files of the Ministry of the Interior in Baden-Württemberg, 'Jugendwohlfahrt: Unterhalt für unehelich geborene Kinder von Mitgliedern ausländischer Streitkräfte', Baden-Württembergisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart (HStAStg), EA2/008. These files refer to children of foreign soldiers, and deal specifically with the American zone of occupation until 1955.

[92] Information of Väter-Aktuell. See http://www.vaeter-aktuell.de/kriegskinder/Deutschland/USA-1945.htm (last visited 3 Oct. 2010).

custody over their children.[93] As a result of this legal jungle, any potential family unification was complicated, and even in cases where both parents intended to build a joint future with and for their children, they were prevented from doing so by bureaucratic idiosyncrasies.

As in Great Britain, public and political debates about the fate of children of the occupation in Germany were initially notable only for their absence. This is surprising in as much as family sociological debates took place both in the academic and the political spheres. As early as 1946, René König's *Materialien zur Soziologie der Familie* argued for his discipline to provide family political decision makers with the means to develop such policies in a socio-economically adequate form.[94] And Helmut Schelsky's 1953 study *Wandlungen der deutschen Familie in der Gegenwart*[95] was a groundbreaking empirical–sociological snapshot of post-war German families that demonstrated clearly that the topic was on the agenda of sociological researchers and – given its broad reception beyond academia – by implication also on the agenda of the political decision makers.

What is more, beyond the confines of academia the constitutional discourse of the late 1940s provided the 'new democratic' Germany with the opportunity to undertake normative debates about the altered political and social circumstances, including the constitutional protection of marriage, family and also illegitimate children. The Social Democrat Friederike Nadig, in the debates on the constitution to be drafted, considered the fate of those members of post-war German society who no longer fitted into the old model of the two-parent nuclear family. Contemplating the 'surplus of women', which effectively was a 'post-war shortage of men', she pleaded for a new form of familial existence, the *Mutterfamilie* ('mother family'). Commenting on one particular group, illegitimate children, she added that the coloured children of the occupation were hit hardest by the prevailing family laws and social norms.[96] Children of the occupation in general were mentioned in the debate, amid a general awareness of the social problems associated with illegitimacy in the late 1940s. Yet, it is interesting to note that only piecemeal initiatives were used to deal with the children of the occupation. The impression was given that social and child welfare policies, while having the best interest of the children in mind, also – and perhaps predominantly – served a wider political purpose in Germany, namely the construction of an image of a democratic and racially tolerant and supportive 'new' Germany.

As Nadig comments, in Germany, too, the children of African-American descent – who could not hide and could not be hidden – were perceived as facing additional hardship. A symptom of this was that, for better or for worse, they received more attention from the local population and political decision makers. A clear recognition of political responsibility, arising out of the National Socialist legacy, guided sociological and political discussions of the subject. Therefore attempts at a

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[93] 'Occupation', *Newsweek*, 16 June 1947, 48. See also Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 94–101.
[94] René König, *Materialien zur Soziologie der Familie* (Bern: Francke, 1946), 54.
[95] Helmut Schelsky, *Wandlungen in der deutschen Familie der Gegenwart* (Dortmund: Ardey, 1953).
[96] Friederike Nadig zur rechtlichen Stellung nichtehelicher Kinder, *Parlamentarischer Rat. Stenographischer Bericht* (Bonn, 1949), 18 Jan. 1949, 552.

pragmatic solution to the problem of Germany's 'brown babies' had to be formulated as a race-related policy that was distanced from the racist discourse of the Hitler years.[97]

Post-war debates about the integration of mixed-race children took place against the background of the continuing occupation, in which the US occupation power acted with the proclaimed aim of the democratisation of Germany. This was to be based not only on a turning away from National Socialism in general but specifically also on the explicit respect of human rights and a renunciation of antisemitism and racism. Like Germany, the United States were grappling with challenges to entrenched racial ideologies. The US military government in Germany still operated in a segregated way on the basis of racial inequalities, which contradicted the clearly stated aims of democratic re-education of the former German enemy and caused fundamental problems for the credibility of the Americans as pillars of democracy and freedom.[98] Segregation in the United States and the resulting reluctance on the part of local officers in Germany to grant permission to African-American soldiers to marry their German girl friends meant that almost all children of German women and black GIs were born illegitimately. According to German law at the time, children lacking a male guardian became wards of the local or state youth office, and as few white German men would accept responsibility for a mixed-race child, even if they were married to the mother, institutional involvement was a given in the majority of cases.

In 1947, a French official from the International Refugee Organisation, commenting on 'brown babies' in children's homes, reported about the dire situation of the Afro-German children and recommended a removal of those children to the racially more diverse and tolerant France.[99] This coincided with the first discussions about their fate in the emerging Federal Republic, initially at a municipal level. Furthermore, US authorities took first steps to establish the numbers of German GI-children, the treatment of different paternity cases, citizenship issues as well as the living conditions of those children cared for in Germany's children's homes. This led to a memorandum, on 14 September 1948, on 'Paternity of Illegitimate Children'.[100]

There is no evidence of German debates prior to 1947 concerning children of the occupation, and the focus of discussions, when they did occur, was the situation of children of biracial provenance. The dealings with the 'problem' of the mixed-race children took place broadly concurrently at two societal levels: first, the children

[97] See Heide Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 31–9, 53–61, 80–8.

[98] For details, see Peggy Pascoe, 'Miscegenation Law, Court Cases, and Ideologies of "Race" in 20th Century America', in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 464–90; also Samuel Stouffer, *The American Soldier: Studies in Social Psychology in World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), 548; For comparative perspective on Britain, see also Sonya O. Rose, 'Girls and GIs: Race, Sex, and Diplomacy in Second World War Britain', *International History Review*, 19 (1997), 146–60, here 156–7.

[99] Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder*, 6.

[100] Eva Simonsen, 'Into the Open – Or Hidden Away?', *NOREUROPAforum*, 16 (2006), 25–50, here 40.

and their mothers became objects of scientific and particularly sociological studies;[101] and, second, on a political level decisions about their integration into West German society were coupled with an attempt at re-educating the German public.

The discourse about the Afro-German children has to be seen in the context of and as a response to the treatment of children born to German mothers and colonial African troops during the French occupation of the Rhineland in the inter-war years. In a race-hate campaign, the so-called 'Black Horror on the Rhine', the children who became known as 'Rhineland Bastards' had been forcibly sterilised under the Nazi regime.[102] The post-war race-related debates, therefore, potentially could be used by German decision makers to demonstrate that such racially motivated injustice was a thing of the past and that the new democratic Germany would 'look after all its citizens' irrespective of race or religion.

It is no coincidence that the first parliamentary debate on the by then estimated 94,000 illegitimate children of the occupation took place in the Bundestag in early 1952, just before the first children entered the school system. The focal point of the debate was the situation of the mixed-race children, about which the Bundestag concluded that they posed a 'human and racial problem of a special nature'.[103] At the same time parliamentarians expressed concern that the West German public was not yet capable of assuming a posture 'free of racial prejudice', and that only a 'long-term education process [would] be able to dislodge the traditions that caused a belief in the racial superiority of the white Germans'.[104] This assessment was in sharp contrast to both a 1949 survey that suggested that 'German mothers treated their "Mischlingskinder" considerably better than their counterparts in England and Japan' as in Germany 'not only is infanticide unthinkable but even separation is rarely considered'.[105] While this poll commented only on the children's mothers, a more elaborate study of the International Union for Child Welfare in Geneva came to the conclusion that in post-war West Germany 'the cases in which mixed-race children are being rejected by their communities because of their family background should be considered an exception. Generally, the relatives, neighbors, and other children meet them with cordiality and affection.'[106]

This appeared to be the case despite the fact that the prevailing view among policy makers in the Federal Republic was that it would be difficult to ensure the children's

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[101] Walter Kirchner, *Eine anthroposiphische Studie an Mulattenkindern in Berlin unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der sozialien Verhältnisse* (Berlin: self-publication, 1952); Rudolf Sieg, *Mischlingskinder in Westdeutschland. Festschrift für Frédéric Falkenburger* (Baden-Baden: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1954).

[102] Rainer Pommerin, *Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde: das Schicksal einer farbigen Minderheit 1918–1937* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1979).

[103] *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, Stenographische Berichte*, 1. Legislaturperiode, 10, 12 March 1952, 8505ff.

[104] 'What Has Become of the 94.000 Occupation Babies?', *Das Parlament*, 19 Mar. 1952, cited in Inez Templeton, 'What's so German About it? Cultural Identity in the Berlin Hip Hop Scene', D.Phil. thesis, University of Stirling, 2005, 78.

[105] *Survey* poll, cited in Peter H. Koepf, 'An Unexpected Freedom', *The Atlantic Times*, 1 April 2009.

[106] Koepf, 'Unexpected Freedom'.

integration into their birth country. In the political discussions about their future three main possible ways forward had emerged: (1) the children should be integrated as far as possible into German society, whether within the care system, as adopted children or within their own families or extended families; (2) the children should be raised in segregated homes; or (3) the children should be adopted by African-American couples.

The least favoured option was that of the non-integrationist intervention, particularly if it meant raising children in segregated homes. Despite the general rejection of this concept as a viable long-term solution, such homes existed. The most prominent of them, an Albert-Schweitzer-Children's Home in Wermelskirchen, was run between 1952 and 1959 by a white German pastor's wife, Irene Dilloo, without official state support, though with some benevolent encouragement.[107] The aim was to allow children to grow up in an atmosphere that would spare them the psychological and emotional challenges of living as part of a small coloured minority in an almost exclusively white German society. In a second step, the children were to be prepared for an adoption into a black home in the United States.[108] This approach closely mirrors Celia Bangham's ideas as put into practice in Holnicote House several years earlier. Yet, there is no indication that the Somerset experiences played any part in the decision to establish Dilloo's children's home. Although some children were eventually adopted in the United States,[109] the project did not turn into a large-scale success, not least because of the reluctance of the children's mothers to agree to transnational adoptions.

The majority of mixed-race children of the occupation lived in families, either in the families of their mothers or in adoptive families.[110] After it had become evident throughout the first post-war decade that this pattern would essentially remain the same, state and municipal officials, helped by educators, social workers and at times even journalists, focused on racial re-education within Germany. Concerted actions coincided with integration milestones of what was a relatively age-homogeneous group, for instance school enrolment or the start of post-school vocational training. Not only did the first parliamentary debate occur just before the first African-American occupation children entered the German school system in 1952 but the public education campaign also gathered pace at that time. In an attempt to prepare teachers for the anticipated challenges of mixed-race pupils, *Maxi, unser Negerbub* (Maxi, our Negro Boy) was published. It was the story of a teacher's attempt to grapple with the prejudices against his black German pupil through determined efforts to

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[107] For details, see Irene Dilloo's letter to *Ebony*, April 1960, 20.

[108] The activities of Irene Dilloo are well documented in the Bundesarchiv, See BAK: B153/342 and in the Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands (ADW), HGSt1161 and 1193.

[109] See, for example, the story of Udo Ackermann, 'I Am a Miracle', http://truemovies.com/ forum/tm.aspx?m=1021&mpage=1&key=&#1021 (last visited 11 May 2010).

[110] Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung. Afrodeutsche "Besatzungskinder" im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002).

help him integrate into his white environment.[111] Similarly, in 1952 the feature film *Toxi* hit the cinema screens. The main character, the five-year-old African-German Toxi, was adopted from a children's home into an affluent German family, triggering one of the core themes of the film, the juxtaposition of racial prejudice and social responsibility.[112]

Despite the educational efforts of the welfare officials, care institutions and, equally importantly, of open-minded caring families, who adopted mixed-race children of the occupation, and despite the fact that only 12 per cent of all such children grew up in welfare institutions,[113] the image prevailed – in political discussions as well as in public debates in West Germany and abroad– that African-German children were unwanted. This may be explained in terms of the preconceptions caused by Germany's earlier dealings with mixed-race children during the inter-war period, or it may reflect the history of adoption in Germany and the legal framework within which it took place.

Even more so than in the UK, post-war adoption laws in Germany were antiquated. Adoption had initially been legally regulated in the *Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* of 1900, and was not regarded as a child welfare issue. Instead it was designed to allow childless couples to instate an heir and, as a result, adoption of young children had been rare. The reduction of the minimum age for adoptive parents from 50 to 35 years in 1961 indicated a change in thinking about adoption but it took another fifteen years until adoption was thoroughly reformed in child welfare terms.[114] However, as Heide Fehrenbach argues convincingly in her study of mixed-race GI-children in post-war Germany, although adoption laws were temporarily modified in response to the social and familial upheavals caused by the Second World War, this was done to 'integrate unrelated white German children into West German families' and left 'occupation children' of foreign paternity in an even more vulnerable position.[115]

This impression of the unwanted 'brown babies' and in particular their fate within the care system, was reinforced by press coverage within the United States, from where regular 'inspection visits' were initiated to report about the GI-children. Between the late 1940s and mid-1950s reports appeared in numerous publications such as *Newsweek*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *News and World Report*, *Ebony*, or *Afro-American*.[116] It is interesting to note that similar scrutiny was never considered to be necessary in the case of mixed-race children in Great Britain. As a reaction to one such

[111] Alfons Simon, *Maxi, unser Negerbub* (Bremen: Eilers, 1952).

[112] Annette Brauerhoch, '"Mohrenkopf". Schwarzes Kind und weiße Nachkriegsgesellschaft in TOXI', *Frauen und Film*, 60 (1997), 106–30.

[113] According to surveys of the Public Health Division of the military government in Germany and the Deutschen Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge 76 per cent of African-German occupation children lived with their mothers or other relatives and only 12 per cent in orphanages or other children's homes. Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, 'Germany's "Brown Babies" Must be Helped! Will You?' U.S. Adoption Plans for African-German Children, 1950–1955, *Callaloo*, 26, 2 (2003), 342–62, here 346.

[114] Christoph Neukirchen, *Die rechtshistorische Entwicklung der Adoption* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2005).

[115] Fehrenbach, *Race*, 149.

[116] For details, see Fehrenbach, *Race*, 132–7 and 232, note 7.

newspaper report, Ethel Butler, an African-American widowed teacher, decided to work towards adopting some of those children and thereby giving them a new home in the United States. After years of bureaucratic wrangling, she succeeded in adopting two children. This adoption had far-reaching consequences for other German mixed-race GI-children. The perceived 'fight' against the adoption bureaucracies in both countries, reported elaborately by the African-American press in the United States, led to an increase in public interest of potential adoptive parents. Furthermore, Butler had scored an important bureaucratic and legal victory in that her children were classified as war orphans, allowing them privileged immigration status irrespective of quotas applicable to their birth countries.[117]

Butler's efforts to put the problem of 'brown babies' on the radar of officials in both West Germany and the United States also helped another African-American women working for a more permanent solution to the insecure situation of many 'brown babies' in German institutions. Mabel A. Grammer, wife of US warrant officer Oscar Grammar, who had been stationed in Mannheim between 1950 and 1954, was herself a journalist for the *African-American*. She instigated the so-called 'Brown Baby Plan', which arranged for the adoption of several hundred children into African-American and African-German families by 1954.[118] Mabel Grammer's initiative had been triggered by the situation of the poverty and stigmatisation experienced by many women who had decided to bring up their mixed-race children in their own families. As Mrs Grammer had observed, negative sentiments towards the mothers as well as prejudices and social exclusion were often transferred directly onto the children and led to discrimination. It was this discrimination that she was trying to counteract by working towards transnational adoption.[119]

The German response to the privately instigated adoption programmes of Butler and Mabel Grammar demonstrates the widely held belief that mixed-race occupation children could be better cared for in African-American than in their mother's families. Adoption plans received an enthusiastic reception from the popular press,[120] and politicians at all levels, municipal, state and federal,[121] argued that emigration to their paternal homeland might be preferable for the children. However, the complexities of inter-country adoptions, the bureaucratic complications caused by US immigration laws, as well as the severe reservations of the International Social Service against proxy adoption in particular, led to a slow adjustment of views in Germany throughout the 1950s. By the mid-1950s, despite several hundred adoptions, it had become clear that large numbers of mixed-race children would remain in Germany, and the emphasis,

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[117] Lemke de Faria, 'Germany's Brown Babies', 343–4.
[118] See http://www.grammerchildren.com/ (last visited 26 Oct. 2010).
[119] Stephanie Siek, 'The Difficult Identities of Germany's Brown Babies', *Spiegel Online International*, 13 Oct. 2009, http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,651989,00.html (last visited 8 Jan. 2010).
[120] 'Mammies für die Negerlein', *Stern*, 27 Aug. 1950, 29; and 'Mammies für die Negerlein', *Stern*, 2 March 1952, 8; see also Correspondence from the editors of *Revue* to the State Youth Welfare Office, Marktredwitz, 22 Feb. 1952, BayHStA, MInn 81096.
[121] Fehrenbach, *Race*, 140ff.

as described above, moved away from solving the 'brown baby' problem outside to solving it inside Germany. In stark contrast to Great Britain where, despite a similar number of mixed-race occupation children no discussions of this kind took place, West Germany continued to address the issue throughout the 1950s at an academic and a political level. A federally funded socio-psychological study carried out by the Hamburg psychologist Klaus Eyferth compared white and mixed-race children of the occupation, investigating in particular the links between race and intelligence and concluded that the study could not determine links between the two.[122] The research, subsequently published in elaborated form as a book on the integration of mixed-race children into German society,[123] became the authoritative source informing policy recommendations in the Federal Republic in the 1960s, at a time when many children, now adolescents, were passing another educational milestone, the move from school into employment.

III.

Systematic analysis of the welfare of children of the occupation in general and GI-children in particular is marred by a lack of quantitative and qualitative data about many of their circumstances. Inevitably, any attempt to engage in a historical evaluation will have elements of a top-down exercise, heavily reliant on published and unpublished governmental and administrative records and secondary analyses which are supplemented by accounts from the affected children that provide anecdotal rather than qualitatively and quantitatively comprehensive or even representative evidence. Nevertheless, by bringing together the diverse sources it has been possible to throw some light on the 'children the GIs left behind' and the policies of both Great Britain and Germany in dealing with the children throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

What is clear from the above analysis is that in both countries, children of the occupation as such were not perceived as a phenomenon that required state intervention, or even called for particular support for the children or families in question. By and large it was expected that the children fathered by foreign soldiers would be absorbed into their mothers' families and the local communities with the expectation that, where applicable, the mothers' husbands would adopt the children or act as their guardian. Alternatively, in the case of unmarried mothers it was envisaged that the women would either emigrate to the United States with their children as war brides or that the children would be raised by their single mothers or their mothers' families.

The various approaches to dealing with children of GIs in Britain have to be seen in the context of the redefinition of family and nation in the mid-twentieth century. The Second World War with mass displacements and record numbers of homeless and

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[122] Klaus Eyferth, 'Eine Untersuchung der Neger-Mischlingskinder in Westdeutschland', *Vita Humana*, 2 (1959), 102–14.

[123] Klaus Eyfferth, Ursula Brandt and Wolfgang Hawel, *Farbige Kinder in Deutschland. Die Situation der Mischlingskinder und die Aufgabe ihrer Eingliederung* (Munich: Juventa, 1960).

orphaned children throughout Europe, skilfully explored in Tara Zahra's exposition of 'lost children'[124] at the post-war intersection of redefinition of family and nation, led to a concerted effort to rehabilitate those children beyond the provision of material goods by way of 'amelioration of psychological suffering'.[125] Zahra shows that 'nation and family were seen as essential sources of individual identity and agency' by humanitarian activists and that this approach was tightly linked not only to emerging theories of child development but can be traced to a deeply rooted liberal tradition that saw the family, in opposition to the state, as 'the bedrock of civil society'.

In contrast to the more general debates of how to best serve the interest of European children affected by the war through displacement, expulsion or flight, efforts to deal with the situation faced by children born of war were largely non-existent, especially in the first post-war years. The number of GI-children was small in comparison with other displaced and orphaned children. The instrumentalisation of children as 'national property'[126] that has been shown to have played a significant role in the formulation of child welfare policies played less of a role in Britain than on the European continent, where reconstruction went hand in hand with democratisation and nation-building. The only problems that were openly acknowledged at the time were those of mixed-race children whose appearance distinguished them from the surrounding environment. In their case, as the example of Holnicote House demonstrates, prevailing familialist values, often lamented to have suffered as a result of wartime social upheavals and systematically revived after the war as a means to 'return to normality'[127] were put aside in favour of a placement of children in the care system. In other words, instead of supporting young mothers of GI-children to bring up their children in a nuclear or extended family, a blanket solution of placing the children in care in preparation for adoption into mixed-race or black families at a later stage was favoured.

While in both Great Britain and West Germany some recognition of the specific challenges faced by these children in the form of racial and social prejudices was recognised, the response in those two countries differed significantly. In Britain, little public and open political debate took place. Examples of members of the public voicing unease are numerous, and concern was also expressed by interested groups such as the League of Coloured Peoples, whose members demanded that each baby was to be treated as a 'war casualty' in order to 'forestall a social problem which might not only affect the life of this country but which might also affect Anglo-American relations'. But this merely resulted in responses from the Ministry of Health and

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[124] Tara Zahra, 'Lost Children: Displacement, Family and Nation in Postwar Europe', *Journal of Modern History*, 81, 1 (2009), 45–86.

[125] United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 'Psychological Problems of Displaced Persons', June 1945, cited in Zahra, 'Lost Children', 47.

[126] Ibid., 50, 56, 72.

[127] Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann, eds., *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Whitehall officials directly rather than triggering public, academic or parliamentary debates.[128]

In sharp contrast, in Germany official and public responses to the existence of mixed-race GI-children occurred in distinct phases and ultimately resulted in a comparatively extensive public discourse. After an initial period of virtual silence on the subject amounting to almost a denial of the existence of a problem until about 1947, between 1948 and 1951, public, press, academia and politics – both in Germany and the United States – became aware of the reality of a significant (and growing) number of 'brown babies' in occupied Germany. In this phase the preferred solution to the problem, favoured by various groups who took part in the process of opinion formation, was a combination of initial segregation combined with eventual adoption and, linked to this, emigration to the United States. Once it had become clear that large-scale migration was not a practicable solution, the debate shifted, and the emphasis was placed on racial re-education of the German population designed to facilitate the integration of Afro-German children into West German society. It has been argued that in the Federal Republic child welfare as evidenced in dealing with mixed-race GI-children was treated predominantly as a political tool in order to facilitate the remodelling of West Germany as a tolerant society 'demonstrating good intentions and the willingness for social reform'.[129] This appears unduly critical given that the country, particularly in comparison with Great Britain, the only other West European country with a significant number of Afro-European GI-children, allowed public debates and engaged in academic discourse about the sociological and socio-psychological challenges faced by the children, their families and the society that – if belatedly – eventually saw the need to address their integration.

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[128] Harold Moody to Aneurin Bevan, March 1946, MH55/1656, TNA.
[129] Simonsen, 'Into the Open', 48.