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The black experience in postwar Germany

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Jamie Morris

Introduction

In the late 1940s a young and frightened German girl believed that the African-American soldiers marching through her town had tails hidden in their trousers, a rumor that had been told to her by a passing white soldier. A decade later that girl was dating one of those same black GIs, and had in fact approached him first to get his attention. She may have been recalling the fact that it was the black soldiers who had treated her the best as a child, giving her gifts and making sure she was clean, or she may have simply desired an American boyfriend in the hopes that he would lavish her with his comparatively rich lifestyle. The girl's attitude reflects that of many Germans towards blacks in the late 1940s and 1950s.[1] Public opinion of black soldiers grew locally in the towns that hosted them, driven in no small part bv their generosity and kindness compared to that of white GIs, but their exotic appearance and unique American outlook also attracted attention and praise.

Of course there was also some strong resistance to the stationing of black American soldiers in occupied Germany. Vestiges of the National Socialist ideology of racial purity remained in many Germans' thoughts, if not always in their speech and actions, as well as the traditional prejudice against anything different from themselves that clung still to most Europeans. But because of the intense Nazi focus on race and cleansing, and the uncovering of the Nazi atrocities, Germany was forced into a unique position of having to prove its mended ways; as historian Heide Fehrenbach notes, "The postwar logic of race that emerged in Germany was beholden to an internationally enforced injunction that Germans differentiate

[1] Thomas Ward, "Experiencing Germany as an African-American in the Late 1950s," interview conducted by Madeleine Joyce (Vassar College, 2009), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=6#1.

their polity and policies from the Nazi predecessor."[2] Thus over the 1950s the language of "race" all but disappeared in Germany, although prejudices were often just as strong as previously. These hatreds, however, were turned towards the new and highly visible group of racial "others": blacks.[3] Germans maintained a unique outlook towards this new racial group, convincing themselves that they were not racist but proving hostile towards blacks and those who associated with them. An overwhelmingly conservative system of values warred with the Germans' vehement denial of the feelings of the past to create a uniquely hostile yet also inviting environment for African-Americans.

After Nazi Germany surrendered to the Allies in 1945 American troops marched in triumph through the streets of towns and villages. Among the columns were thousands of African-American GIs, usually serving with support or backline outfits. For most Germans it was the first time they had ever seen a black person, and those who expected the rumored brutality were often pleasantly surprised at blacks' generous sharing of food rations and treats such as chocolate and cigarettes.[4] If any Germans had had experience with blacks before the war it would have been extremely limited. Most of the few black Germans before the war had been imprisoned in the concentration camps or killed under Hitler's regime, and as visible symbols of racial impurity and national humiliation had been targeted early in the Nazi racial purges of German society.

Before World War II German-African encounters had been largely negative, primarily due to the colonial aspect of their relationship and the intense European superiority complex of the time. Early twentieth-century European racial theory placed Africans on the very lowest

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[2] Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,2005), 4.
[3] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 6-7.
[4] Maria Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 90.

rung of evolution, blaming their lack of cultural development along more "civilized" lines on visibly inferior biology. German colonial rule in Africa, like that of most European powers, was focused on subduing the native populations and draining resources from the land. Maintaining white superiority was thought to be the key to control, and one aspect of this was avoiding mixing the races; as Fatima El-Tayeb notes, "'Mongrels' (*Mischlinge*), who did not fit into one of the [racial] categories, were an unwanted and dangerous disturbance."[5] Scientists believed that the races were incompatible, and that the children would inherit the worst of both parents. Thus strict regulations were set to severely limit the number of Africans in Germany, and to avoid Afro-Germans at all costs.[6]

When they heard that African-American troops were moving through the country many Germans had been dreading a repeat of the so-called "Black Terror of the Rhineland." Following World War One and the loss of Germany's colonies, France utilized a number of its own African colonial troops as occupation soldiers in the Rhineland in western Germany. These soldiers were allegedly brutal in administering punishment and in their sexual urges, producing reports of thousands of rapes despite the lack of much evidence thereof. It is thought by some historians that it was the innate fear of these caricatures that drove the French to utilize so many colonial troops to humiliate Germany.[7] In the heyday of social Darwinist theory there was little doubt in most Germans' minds that the rumors of assault were true and propaganda against the foreign troops flowed from the Weimar government. This instilled a deep fear and resentment of blacks in Germans that was not alleviated by the presence of the

[5] Fatima El-Tayeb, "Dangerous Liaisons: Race, Nation, and German Identity," in *Not So Plain as Black and White: Afro-German Culture and History, 1890-2000*, ed. Patricia Mazon and Reinhild Steingrover (Rochester: University of Reochester Press, 2005), 38.
[6] El-Tayeb, "Dangerous Liaisons," 33-8.
[7] Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004), 32-6.

"Rhineland bastards," those mixed-race children of German women and the colonial troops that reminded the nation of its defeat.[8]

The number of German children born to African fathers in the Weimar period was low, only numbering several hundred, but still social Darwinist theories of race were concentrated on them and further developed to extremes under the Nazis.[9] Nazi eugenicists saw mixed-race people as a stain on the honor of the nation that had to be expunged. Afro-Germans represented impurity of the *volk*, and they were feared for their supposed negative social influence as much as for their "biological" leans. Many of the blacks were eventually killed or locked away in concentration camps before World War II, but in the early 1930s most of those that could be located via the racial register were forcibly sterilized so they could not further pollute German blood. They were considered not only impure, but also "these mulatto children [were] either the products of violence or their mothers were whores…for us there is only one possibility: the eradication of all aliens, particularly those born of the damage wrought by this brutal violence and immorality."[10] Cruel and pseudo-scientific propaganda in the 1920s had radically demonized anyone of African descent and the Aryan doctrine of other unclean races had firmly taken hold, and so there were few challenges from the public or scientific community to the mistreatment of colored Germans.[11]

It was thus with some reservations that the German people accepted African-Americans into their country as conquerors. Some relationships were easily established, especially between black GIs and young women eager for a taste of the American high life and escape the

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[8] May Opitz, "Racism, Sexism, and Precolonial Images of Africa in Germany," in *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out*, ed. May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye, and Dagmar Schultz , translated by Anne V. Adams (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 44-5.
[9] May Opitz, "Afro-Germans after 1945: The So-Called Occupation Babies," in *Showing Our Colors*, 79.
[10] Hans Macco, *Rasseprobleme in Dritten Reich* [Berlin: P. Schmidt, 1933], 13f, as cited in Pommerin, *"Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde,"* 43, as quoted in Campt, *Other Germans*, 73.
[11] Campt, *Other Germans*, 72-5.

desolation and poverty that Germany had become. Many German men continued to look largely on the black GIs with a mixture of fear and hatred, and were able to team up with white American soldiers to "protect" the *Frauleins* who might have been interested in an interracial relationship. White American soldiers set a hypocritical example for the Germans to follow, preaching freedom and democracy while actively working against the black soldiers they were deployed alongside. But their efforts couldn't stop the wave of mixed-race occupation children from being born; although they were a small percent of the total number of occupation children, the *Mischlingskinder* were an all-too-visible reminder of humiliation for the German people. While there was a considerable amount of racism directed at African-American soldiers and their girlfriends and children from certain sectors of society, including the negative influence of Southern American GIs, Germany nevertheless became seen as a racially progressive country and a highly desirable one for blacks to live in.

Historiography

Most historians have not focused on the role and experiences of blacks in Germany, preferring to study instead the changing German relation to Jews and the other large European racial groups that were cleansed under Hitler's regime. The common approach to addressing the presence of blacks and the German reaction to them is to generalize the German's attitude with the white American soldier's negative attitude towards blacks. While it was certainly common, especially among young German men, to share racist inclinations with the white occupiers, the other subsets of the German population held much more complicated, and often fluctuating, views, especially when the *Mischlingskinder* began to grow to be a highly visible reminder of the German defeat and occupation. By combining the interpretations and data of

the various authors who have studied the German reaction to blacks in the 1950s it is possible to gain an understanding of how the various segments of German society were affected by the presence of African-American soldiers and their half-German offspring. Important in this undertaking are the varied experiences reported by African-American GIs who were stationed in Germany during the occupation. While there are many interviews available there has not been much study devoted to these important assets, and this paper attempts to utilize some of these interviews to judge how the average African-American GI felt that he was received in Germany.

Maria Höhn's *GIs and Frauleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* addresses the interaction of Germans and American soldiers following the Allied occupation of Germany. In her book Höhn argues that Germans viewed the changing social structure of their lives not as Westernization but as Americanization, and accepted the good and the bad lessons and effects that came with it, including the rampant anti-black racism of the American South.[12] Having grown up in Germany in the 1960s, when American soldiers still lived in force in many German communities and the war and subsequent occupation were living memories for much of the population, Höhn is able to provide a unique insight into the contemporary German mindset towards Americans. Her book has a broad focus on all American military relations with Germany, but dedicates significant time to conflicts between African-Americans and white soldiers, Germans, and displaced persons. A main theme of her research on this subject is the sexual competition between black and white men for the favor of German girls, as well as the overblown problems of prostitution and venereal disease. However, Höhn does not address in any major fashion the problem of the several thousand

[12] Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins,* 15.

Afro-German children fathered by black GIs, or how the German people coped with the presence of this new and highly visible segment of society.

Heide Fehrenbach's *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* covers this gap in Höhn's research well. She covers briefly the history of German-African relations before World War Two before entering a lengthy discussion of German racial thought regarding interracial sexuality and the public and official reaction to the *Mischlingskinder*. Fehrenbach argues that the children of black occupation soldiers posed a challenge to Germany's sense of its identity and its pride, and although German democratization proceeded quickly under the occupation the black children were seen as a negative consequence of the new authority and a symbol of national shame.[13] Fehrenbach has written one of the only books that focuses exclusively on the consequences of German and African-American fraternization, and she addresses the issues from the German point of view independently of the American "democratizing" influence. Fehrenbach also reviews the 1952 film *Toxi*, which chronicles the conflict of a German family that is suddenly in possession of the eponymous young black girl. The family is divided on whether to raise Toxi or to place her in an orphanage until opposed members grudgingly come to love her. *Toxi* is a heartwarming and fascinating film but one which suggests Afro-German occupation children would be better off returned to America instead of integrated into German society. The various viewpoints of the different family members reflect the age they were brought up in and are a wonderful window into the German psyche regarding blacks in the 1950s.

John Willoughby's *Remaking the Conquering Heroes: The Social and Geopolitical Impact of the Post-War American Occupation of Germany* follows the issues dealt with by the

[13] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 2.

United States Army trying to rein in its soldiers following victory in World War Two. He argues that the American occupation army "served as martial tourists," a restless standing army of young men symbolizing the new American world-dominating power.[14] Willoughby addresses the foundation and impact of American military bases in Germany on their surrounding communities. His discussion of black soldiers focuses mainly on the Amery's problems dealing with the racial tensions between black and white GIs, as well as conflicts with local German men. The descriptions of several violent altercations that occurred between blacks and whites indicate a mostly negative impact on German communities by black soldiers, but Willoughby does not devote a great amount of attention to broader varieties of interracial interaction.

Showing our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out, edited by May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye, and Dagmar Schultz, and *Not so Plain as Black and White: Afro-German Culture and History, 1890-2000*, edited by Patricia Mazon and Reinhild Steingrover, each consist of a collection of papers and articles written on the topic of Afro-Germans before, during, and after World War Two. *Showing our Colors* attempts to prove through the personal experiences of Afro-German women the consistently racist undercurrents in German society, as well as to push into public view the struggle of being singled out as different simply by virtue of skin color in a country that places great value in its Nordic heritage.[15] *Not So Plain as Black and White* explores the generally improving German view of Africans and Afro-Germans over time, and shows that in the 1950s the German view of African-Americans was confused because of the American kindness contrasting with Nazi conditioning, though the Germans still viewed the new generation of Afro-German children as suspicious and shameful.

[14] John Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes: The Social and Geopolitical Impact of the Post-War American Occupation of Germany* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 3.
[15] May Opitz, introduction to *Showing our Colors*, xxi-xxii.

Unfortunately many articles in both works extend too far forward or back in the timeline to be of much use to the study of German racism in the period immediately following World War Two.

Tina Campt's *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* provides detailed information regarding the fate of those Afro-Germans still living in Germany under Hitler. Campt argues that the Nazi defamation and purge of Afro-Germans in the 1930s was a much more complex social process of racializing than is usually indicated, and that it had a far-reaching effect on German attitudes in the following decades.[16] While her study of these forgotten victims of the Holocaust is important, it is the transcripts of her interviews with survivors that makes Campt's book valuable. They help to determine the course of German prejudices from the time of Hitler through the occupation period from the point of view of those who were discriminated against.

Ascertaining the level of German anti-black racism in the decade following World War Two is difficult because of the huge discrepancies in the opinions held by the various classes, genders, and ages of Germans. Because it is hard to pin down the average level of German racism in this period, especially following the Nazi state and which many historians take to be extremely negative, there is here instead a focus on various sections of society. It is easier to form generalizations for smaller groups of people and so this paper attempts to find out why trends of racism did or did not form in groups, and how strongly these groups felt. It is important to be able to gauge how rapidly feelings such as hatred can morph into acceptance, or how swiftly they can be projected onto a new target. The feelings of the Germans towards blacks after World War Two is a key study in this regard because there are few opportunities to

[16] Campt, *Other Germans,* 2.

examine the sudden social shift of a hatred such as that espoused by the Nazi state, both inward and onto a new scapegoat. The meddling of the American military and the occupation's bumbling denazification scheme provided a morass of conflicting opinions to further confuse the racial situation in Germany, adding another element to the analysis of the evolution of German racism.

German Contact with Black GIs

When African-American troops encountered German civilians for the first time in victory there was a considerable amount of hostility shown towards them. Verbal and some rare physical abuse, openly hostile glares, and an overt feeling of fear and distrust greeted black GIs as they marched through German towns. While this hostile reaction could have been directed at any conquering army no matter their race, the fact that many of the American soldiers were black elicited a strong response from many Germans who did not know anything about blacks other than what the propaganda and rumors had told them. Some had heard that blacks possessed tails; many feared the potential for rape and assault from the supposedly primitive and brute race. Black GIs were a symbol of true fear and humiliation for the Germans immediately after the Allied victory.[17]

Soon fears for many were dispelled. Many African-American soldiers quickly distinguished themselves through their kindness. Often extremely friendly and outgoing, and unusually generous with their rations and care packages, black soldiers endeared themselves to the German population. Their care, and pity, for the crushed German people was beyond what many of the more arrogant white American soldiers showed and the almost overwhelmingly

[17] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 32.

positive initial encounters between Germans and black GIs may have allowed peace to flourish with more ease and Nazi racial propaganda to be dispelled. Maria Höhn suggests that the defeated Germans may have even felt a parallel between themselves and black soldiers who were perceived as being treated as second-class citizens by their white comrades, allowing some friendship and forgiveness to grow between the groups.[18]

Many black GIs even found Germany to be immediately more welcoming and friendly than the United States had ever been to them. Since there was a not a large visible minority population in Europe at the time, there were no specifically racist social institutions in place, such as the American practice of segregation. This simple fact meant, for example, that black soldiers had much more freedom to go where they liked. It was often not even until white GIs were able to enforce their own racial law in the towns they were stationed in that any form of public racism was evident. In an interview Army mechanic Lawrence Johnson, who served in Berlin for several months in 1945 on guard duty, could not recall ever being involved with any serious racially charged incidents. He remembered the German people as being "very mannerly and even hospitable…They were very courteous, you know."[19] Although he felt that they "were too highly intelligent for…being indoctrinated to discriminate against black people," an assumption in which he was proven wrong by the past, he and his company never felt unwelcome.[20] Other evidence, however, does point to a high and developing level of anti-black racism in parts of occupied Germany.

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[18] Höhn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 90-1.
[19] Lawrence Johnson, "A Lot of Pleasure in Berlin," interview conducted by Maggi Morehouse (University of South Carolina Aiken, 1998), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=6.
[20] L. Johnson interview, "A Lot of Pleasure in Berlin."

Despite the fast trust won by some soldiers, some still faced strong overt or covert racism due to the societal norms of Germany. The German people had been conditioned for years by the Nazi party to look down upon non-Aryan races as inherently inferior, and this feeling was hard to shake for some. Of course they were also expected to distance themselves from the ideology of the previous decade as quickly and completely as possible as well, but a person's ideals cannot be changed overnight, and even before Hitler there had been strong anti-black feelings firmly entrenched in the German psyche and culture. Colonialism and the Black Terror in the 1920s had instilled fear and a superiority complex, and even German children learned in their games, stories, and candies that somehow there was a difference between themselves and blacks.[21] Only a few years after the war's end, despite the frantic attempts made to remove race from the language and thought of Germany's citizens, many increasingly placed blame for their personal and national troubles on blacks. For many trying to force their thoughts away from the prevailing Nazi anti-Semitic attitudes, their racist anger was channeled instead towards the new and much more visible threat of blacks.[22]

Fraternization

In the initial stage of occupation American soldiers were not allowed to fraternize with the German people, confined mostly to their barracks. This policy was changed almost immediately, however, due to both the unrest of the soldiers and the idea that better mutual feelings could be fostered with the Germans by allowing the Americans to mix freely with them. The communities surrounding the American military bases that were established to house and maintain the troop presence became the main mixing places for Germans and GIs,

[21] El-Tayeb, "Dangerous Liaisons," 29-34.
[22] Edward A. Morrow, "New 'Scapegoat' Groups for Germans Noted; Negro, Russian Replacing Jew in Racist Hate," *New York Times*, May 31, 1948.

both black and white. The bases provided security and living space for Americans and brought an all-important immediate boost to the economies of any town they were located in because of the large amount of money that American soldiers had available to spend. At a time when Germany's own economy and infrastructure had been destroyed, the injection of a large amount of American cash was invaluable. The bases also provided jobs for many Germans from the surrounding areas in various support, secretarial, and military retail positions. A large and lucrative black market for luxury items such as cigarettes also grew up around the bases, often facilitated by the GIs themselves trying to make an easy profit to supplement their income. Although they often participated in the black market, some Germans considered blacks to be far more generous in reacting to the needs of the people than trying to make money by hiking up prices on everyday items, gaining blacks more respect in the base communities.[23] As long as there was trade there was less racism present, and this sentiment persisted into average life; although one African-American GI considered the Germans to be the most prejudiced people he had met besides other Americans[24], another considered that the Germans had suffered so much already they didn't care who they traded with and so he had good relations with them.[25]

Although there was an outcry from the United States about allowing GIs to fraternize with German civilians, which was largely the result of wives of servicemen worried about encouraging infidelity in their husbands, the Army ban on fraternization was swiftly lifted.[26]

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[23] "Negro soldier has changed, is young, inexperienced," *Ebony*, January, 1952, 57.
[24] Walter Patrice, interview conducted by American Culture Colloquium (2010) , *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=6#9.
[25] Milton and Charlotte Johnson, interview conducted by Maria Hohn and Merema Ahmed (2010), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=6#9.
[26] Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes*, 118.

American soldiers jumped at the chance to get out into the towns and meet people, and although some black soldiers had some initial trepidation about the opinions of the German people, and vice versa, many of these fears were quickly erased through shared experience and the friendliness born of meeting new people with a vastly different culture. All of the Americans brought with them the capitalist consumer lifestyle that was expanding in the United States but it was black soldiers who shared more of their luxury items with Germans. Alongside the Germans' natural curiosity about the exotic African-American soldiers, trying timidly to find out if any of the rumors they had heard of deviant physiology or psychology were true, their own openness, once trust was established, allowed blacks to feel sometimes more welcome in Germany than they ever had at home in the United States, particularly if they were from the South. One American reporter noted that "here where once Aryanism ruled supreme, Negroes are finding more friendship, more respect, and more equality than they would back home…much of the cordiality shown by white Germans to black Americans is genuine, for Berliners never personally knew or hated Negroes."[27]

For some Germans and African-Americans they were able to bond over a shared love of music, and in particular jazz music. The modern black musical form swept through Germany, grabbing the hearts of men and women of all ages and classes in all regions of the divided nation, although it mostly attracted the younger generation. Possibly the wild spread of jazz music was facilitated precisely by its "*undeutsch*"-ness, with its free forms allowing an escape from the traditional nationalistic fare championed by the Nazi party for over a decade, for whatever reason jazz allowed blacks and Germans to connect on a popular level. An enthusiastic German trumpet player in Frankfort said that jazz "is the most democratic thing in

[27] "Germany meets the negro soldier: GIs find more friendship and equality in Berlin than in Birmingham or on Broadway," *Ebony*, October, 1946, 5.

the world…it unites people of various races and nationalities and teaches them to work together and understand each other, to respect and appreciate one another's ideas."[28] Jazz was sometimes able to bring blacks and Germans to understand each other better than "what any number of speeches and propaganda barrages have failed to do."[29] By the 1950s jazz clubs could be found all over Germany featuring artists of both nationalities playing music with a strange blend of American slang and German, and artists of any race were glad to discuss and play music that they could share joy in.[30] Jazz was not the only musical form that brought Germans and blacks together, however: in some Americanized community centers black soldiers taught German youths old Southern spiritual tunes. They made fast friends and helped each other learn their languages and customs, as well as built support in the community. The boys singing drew huge crowds and many requests to sing the spirituals locally, and the soldiers teaching them helped to foster good relations with the surrounding towns.[31]

Even while they fostered goodwill, in most communities black soldiers still caused consternation and discomfort amongst a certain sector of the population. Many German men, and especially young men, expressed a fear and hatred of blacks. In a poll of black troops in 1946 the *New York Amsterdam News* reported that a quarter of the men had met outright fear when trying to get to know German families.[32] Their anger stemmed from two main sources: their wounded masculine pride in being defeated in the war, and, more importantly, the presence of new sexual competition for the women in their towns. Many German men

[28] Richard Hanser, "U.S. Conquest: 'Hot Yahtz': Jazz music has already captured the Germans, whatever their response may be to more serious 'reorientation,'" *New York Times*, August 20, 1950.
[29] Hasmer, "U.S. Conquest: 'Hot Yahtz.'"
[30] Hasmer, "U.S. Conquest: 'Hot Yahtz.'"
[31] Nora Holt, "Music: German Youths Learn Negro Spirituals Taught by Soldiers at Quaker Center," *New York Amsterdam News*, October 13, 1951.
[32] Trezzvant W. Anderson, "Negro GI's Say Frauleins Okay; Re-enlist for German Service: Won't Marry Even If Law Were Changed," *New York Amsterdam News*, February 2, 1946.

expressed concern for the safety of local women because of the well-rooted black stereotypes of animalistic lust and barely-restrained brutality. Some writers and rumor-mongers even went so far as to suggest that African-American soldiers paid children to find them women, or even seduced young boys and men into homosexuality "because it was not always easy for the 'Negroes…to establish relationships with women.'" Most reports and writings of this sort occurred only in the first few years of the occupation until racial tensions could be alleviated by interaction, but the male German feeling of being sexually threatened remained.[33] Some feelings of hatred increased into the 1950s because of the coming-of-age of the generation that had been born and cultured under Nazi rule. As young German boys who had learned early on of the inferiority of other races grew into teenagers and young men, they represented another wave of competition against the young black soldiers continuing to be shipped to garrison Germany, and they had to learn to tolerate them or join those opposing them.[34] Germany had held laws since colonial times to dissuade interracial relationships, and for a decade before the Americans arrived they had been expressly outlawed, considered an abomination and a punishable crime. The negative feelings were not alleviated by the influence of white American soldiers, many of whom came from the South and also faced competition for girls from their black comrades. Half of the United States maintained laws against interracial marriage, and many white soldiers did their best to discourage fraternization.[35]

If German men felt frightened and threatened by black GIs, many German women had almost the opposite reaction. At the beginning of the occupation many girls were attracted to GIs of any color because of the benefits of sharing their comparatively decadent rations and lifestyle, hoping for gifts of expensive dresses and the like which could only be afforded with

[33] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 94-5.
[34] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 103.
[35] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 37.

an American salary at the time. But soon girls became attracted to black GIs simply because of their kindness and openness, and out of curiosity, and not just for the chance of living well for a while. While Germany had had strict regulations against interracial relationships under the Nazis there had rarely been even the chance for most women to enter one because of the lack of visible minorities in the country, especially once racial cleansing was begun in the late 1930s. Now, with the influx of thousands of young, single African-American men into the country, there was the opportunity for women to sate their curiosity. With the laws revoked in the name of democracy and no formal social barriers against it like there were in the United States interracial love bloomed between German women and black GIs. Milton Johnson, a black GI who married an Austrian woman in Germany while he was stationed there, and Thomas Ward, who was stationed in Germany in the late 1950s, remembered German girls to always be charming and approachable. Girls would approach them on the street to get to know them better if they were interested, and their parents even accepted that their daughters were dating black men.[36] Johnson noted never being to a German's house and being told he wouldn't be served there, and thought that often when Germans used "nigger" to refer to him it wasn't derogatory but merely customary. His wife's statement is perhaps the most telling of all: that when she met him, she "didn't know he was black; he was just American."[37]

Dating a soldier had other attractions too for German girls, principally the opportunity to marry and move to the increasingly materialistic United States. The allure of marriage to an American, and the lure of African-American men who were seen as being very kind, was so strong that some women actively sought out black men simply to marry them. By 1951 *Ebony*

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[36] Thomas Ward, "Experiencing Germany as an African-American in the Late 1950s," interview conducted by Madeleine Joyce (Vassar College, 2009), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=6#1.

[37] M. Johnson, and C. Johnson interview.

magazine had received hundreds of requests from German and Austrian women, and even some men seeking black wives, to print their marriage proposals for any African-American who would marry them and bring them over to the United States. [38] These proposals got thousands of responses, but marrying across both national and racial lines was made extremely difficult by both the social structure of the United States and Germany and of the Army structure and regulations. Even though the marriage ban was lifted for GIs in 1946, when the Army decided it was safer to allow soldiers to court women for wives instead of simply for sex, it was almost impossible for black soldiers to marry German girls.[39] Superior officers usually had to grant permission to marry, as well as Army chaplains performing ceremonies. Many of these men responsible for military marriages were from the South, so while there was no German or nation-wide American law against interracial marriage black soldiers were "discouraged from doing so…everything was done to prevent it."[40]

Decisions to allow military marriages were given to individual commanders, who could refuse to authorize marriage permits for any reason. Some soldiers were reassigned to other parts of the country or even back to the United States in order to disrupt their intentions. Commanders could request proof that the soldier could financially support his fiancée, an almost insurmountable obstacle with the salary of low-ranking men. Chaplains tried to dissuade interracial couples from marrying or refused to perform the ceremony. Half of the states in America had laws on the books making interracial marriage illegal, and so if a black soldier hoping to marry his German girl was from the South or another conservative state and tried to return there he could be arrested or forced apart from his wife, and risked the

[38] "Letters from 2 German Girls Started Offers of Marriage," *Ebony*, March 1951, 66-7.
[39] Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes*, 127.
[40] Jay Jay Aye, "Sepia Illegitimate Babies Abroad Challenge the US," *New York Amsterdam News*, Decemmber 7, 1946.

possibility of being lynched. In one interview with over 500 German women with black partners only four had received wedding permits.[41] One couple was forced to marry four times in both Germany and the United States before their union was considered legal in both nations.[42] Some couples who successfully married decided to stay in Germany to avoid the travails of moving to the United States and trying to integrate back into the culture, or simply because they were furious with the injustice of the miscegenation laws. One soldier even commented that "I would like to stay in Germany forever. I have no longing for the USA."[43]

The American Example

One of the major challenges that the reform of German racial attitudes had to try to surmount was the negative influence of the American example. At the same time that they preached tolerance, equality, and democracy to the German citizens, American policy, society, and the American military were revealed to be massively hypocritical in their attitudes towards people of color. The military especially was guilty of instigating and maintaining prejudice while professing to bring democracy to the defeated nation. When the victorious GIs first marched into Germany in 1945, the Army was still segregated, with most blacks relegated to support duty away from the front lines, and the order for integration would not come for another three years. Partly to blame for prejudice in the Army was the influence of the American South. Many soldiers and even much of the Army leadership were recruited from poor Southern areas of the United States where prejudice was stronger than in the North and their attitudes bled into the German perception of blacks, while stories of racism in America

[41] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 106-7.
[42] M. Johnson, and C. Johnson interview.
[43] "Texas Ban on White Wives Force 30 Soldiers to Stay in Germany," *Jet*, November 21, 1957, 18-19.

caused some Germans to question the integrity and motivation of the country that sought to reform them.

The hypocritical racism of the American military was truly astonishing when it came to setting an example for Germans to follow. The military remained segregated since blacks were first allowed to fight in the American Civil War, even when the draft led to increased enlistment near the beginning of World War Two that would have made it easier to integrate new units. In 1943 most of the several hundred thousand African-American troops were still confined to garrison duty in the United States, and only a very limited number ever saw any combat duty; most black soldiers in the field were relegated to general labor, cooking, and transport duties. An officers' questionnaire in 1943 indicated that the general consensus amongst the military leadership was that black soldiers were best placed away from the front lines in such menial positions.[44] It was in these generally subservient and unskilled positions that black GIs came to Germany in 1945 as a part of a segregated military that professed to represent the homeland of freedom and equality.

The order to integrate the US Army came from President Truman in 1948, but in Germany commanders delayed enacting it for years so integration only happened peacemeal in American units.[45] The order came through for three main reasons. The European theater was likely to gain increasing numbers of black troops due to reenlistment; pressure at home from black activist groups was mounting to change the military's discriminatory policies; and the price to maintain a segregated military on occupation duty cost too high a price, both financially and on the morale and understanding of the German people. While many key military leaders had urged rapid integration since at least 1946, others insisted that there should

[44] Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes*, 51-3.
[45] "Says Army Balks on Bias: Ives Tells Truman of Reports Inquiry in Germany is Held Up," *New York Times*, December 6, 1949.

be no black military presence in Europe at all due to a lingering distrust of the character and skill of African-American troops.[46] One African-American soldier reported that Americans brought the segregation and racism with them, but also recalled why he still felt equal when in the war: "In the Army everybody had a gun, and that made me equal; that was the end of segregation as far as I was concerned."[47]

Official integration was not always easy to achieve, especially if the officer was black. Captain Harold Montgomery was the only black officer in his staff and was stationed in Germany in 1952, four years after President Truman's order to integrate, and found that almost no effort had been put forward to integrate his platoon. He blamed this on the Southern leadership of most of the Army and forced his outfit to integrate personally by setting the example and sitting at the head of the officers' table at every meal and making sure his men mixed in the mess hall.[48] First Sergeant Felix Goodwin shared a similar story. Working in mostly black trucking companies in the beginning of the war he rose to command and pushed integration through a resistant Southern unit. He recounted how he met a Confederate and snake flag in each "white" room in his platoon and let them know that they would have to pay for those extra flags to be flown in each room and with the colors out in front of the barracks, and by being hard and not losing his cool was able to peacefully integrate his unit.[49] The slow integration of Army units showed the German people first-hand that the United States did not respect blacks even in its armed forces and helped to reinforce the sense of blacks as second-

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[46] Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes*, 56-8.
[47] M. Johnson, and C. Johnson interview.
[48] Harold Montgomery, "Integration by Five O'Clock," interview conducted by Maggi Morehouse (University of South Carolina Aiken, 1997), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=6.
[49] Felix Goodwin, "I didn't care whether their Daddy was the head of the Ku Klux Klan," interview conducted by Maggi Morehouse (University of South Carolina Aiken, 1998), *The Civil Rights Struggle, African-American GIs, and Germany*, accessed January 30, 2012, http://www.aacvr-germany.org/AACVR.ORG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=6.

class citizens within the system. Some commanders even worried that an integrated military would only complicate relations between the Army and civilians due to a worry that integrated troops would offend German sensibilities, and the increased potential for clashes over German girls who were already fought for by both white and black soldiers.[50]

Other conditions also helped to enforce this image. In some areas German prisoners of war were treated better and granted more privileges than African-American soldiers were. Sometimes German prisoners were given better food than the soldiers at the mess; other reports show that German POWs were given access to church services that were denied to American servicemen, and there was no chaplain available for ready services. These kinds of treatment showed prisoners that even they were valued much above the black soldiers, a sentiment that could spread through German society when they were released. The transplanting of prejudice by white GIs was a common and blatant complaint, but was only added to by the actions of military police units. MP units are meant to protect the peace and stop violence, but most MP units were all-white and used their power to harass black soldiers, especially if they were seen to be in the company of German women.[51] The soldiers could be detained and the women arrested on suspicion of being prostitutes, even if they were respected and well-known girls in the community who had simply been out on a date.[52]

The American South was hugely influential in the military, and therefore in the relationship between the Army and the German people, especially when it came to the topic of black troops. They used various ploys to minimize contact with black soldiers, such as only allowing country music to be played instead of jazz in clubs frequented by white soldiers. Although it was illegal under the new German Basic Law, white soldiers imported segregation

[50] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 96.
[51] Dowdal H. Davis, "Our GI's Doing Okay in Occupation Army," *New York Amsterdam News*, July 6, 1946.
[52] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 195.

to the communities, using economic pressure as well as shows of force to make the owners of bars, clubs, and shops to refuse to serve blacks. The pressure forced black servicemen to seek out their own haunts and watering holes, and adding to the level of distinct segregation that now illegally existed in the towns surrounding the military bases.

Southern American racism was catchy when it was taught, and some white GIs took it upon themselves to make sure their black compatriots would never be lacking for abuse. Some children were taught to shout "nigger bastard" at black GIs walking on the road, and even mixed-race children were treated abysmally by white soldiers. One woman reported a soldier spitting whenever he passed her mixed-race daughter, and many soldiers showed vehement opposition to any aid given to the *Mischlingskinder*. A tirade by an American officer directed towards a German school principal who was trying to help get some of the orphaned "brown babies" adopted was dripping with venom and the kind of racial vitriol reminiscent of much of the Nazi propaganda that was meant to be buried and forgotten.[53] It was not only first-hand experiences with Southern aggression that influenced the Germans either, but also what they heard from the news. "A lynching in a rural American community" had far-reaching repercussions in Germany. Not only did it horrify many German civilians that these acts were occurring, but events like lynchings completely undermined any American message of equality that they were trying to teach.[54]

The American rehabilitation system tried to replace previous harmful ideologies of the German people with the American ideal with the honorable goal of wiping out Nazism once and for all and creating another free democratic society. But all of the hypocritical racism of America meant that Germans felt insulted that they were being taught these ideals by a nation

[53] "Some Officers Create More Racial Strife in Germany," *Ebony*, December 1952, 78.
[54] Maria Hohn and Matin Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GI's, and Germany* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 70.

that couldn't even enforce them in their own people and had no right trying to do so to them. Not even the Army could enforce any kind of control on the soldiers running amok in the German towns. "The violence between white and black soldiers and the outright contempt that many white GIs expressed toward the black GIs shocked many Germans, especially those who admired the United States as a progressive and democratic model."[55] Army commanders insisted that they had no control over the establishment of Jim Crow rule in the communities surrounding Army bases, and the MP and even some base commanders used their considerable influence to enforce segregation and violent discrimination off-base.[56]

Partly for this disregard for rights and civility black troops became more popular with Germans. The image of the friendly and generous black GIs versus the arrogant white GIs was a common trope, especially among women and children.[57] Thomas Ward was stationed in Germany in the late 1950s and was involved in, and nearly killed in, a fight when he accidentally went to a "white" bar with some of his squadmates. A friendly waitress helped him escape out a back door and find the "black" side of town. He remembered that the German women were always very friendly, and the first girl he dated approached him first to ask him out. She told him that it was the black GIs who would help her when she was little, and give her treats and baths while the white GIs were too proud and looked down on her living in squalor, but still they told her that the black soldiers had tails. Another girl Ward dated invited him in for dinner and to stay the night, and in the morning her parents brought them breakfast in bed, which struck him as remarkable considering he was expecting hatred.[58] Some Germans

[55] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 99.
[56] Hohn, *GIs and Frauleins*, 99.
[57] Hohn and Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom*, 48.
[58] Ward interview, "Experiencing Germany as an African-American in the Late 1950s."

took the lesson to heart and taught themselves democracy and tolerance, since there was no true guidance by example from the Americans.

The Next Generation

After the American military ban on fraternization ended and young soldiers began to woo German girls, the inevitable "baby crop" occurred.[59] Nearly one hundred thousand occupation children were born of foreign fathers to German mothers.[60] This was seen as a terrible tragedy in itself because not a very large portion of the fathers dedicated themselves to their girlfriends and children, leaving the mothers to care for the babies themselves, or if they did stay with them taking them away by marriage to faraway America. But in many Germans' eyes the biggest problem to come out of the explosion of sexual relations between American soldiers and German girls was the roughly three thousand *Mischlinge*: children born of a German mother and black father.[61] These children caused consternation because of how visible they were as "different" in the public eye, and as a glaring symbol of Germany being conquered. While white occupation children could easily blend in with full-blooded Germans and be raised German, mixed-race children did not have that option. Some feared for their sensitivity and the difficulties they would face being different and being called names in school as they grew; some Germans feared that what they would grow into would be the equal of all the small-minded propaganda of blacks and would cause chaos.

In the early 1950s the German government conducted a series of census surveys to ascertain the number of occupation children born, but the racial categories included in the

[59] Nora Holt, "German 'Brown Babies' a Problem," *New York Amsterdam News*, March 25, 1950.
[60] Eugene Davidson, *The Death & Life of Germany: An Account of the American Occupation* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1959), 322.
[61] Davidson, *The Death & Life of Germany*, 322-3.

survey belied both their true purpose of finding the colored children and the new German racial thinking. Because of the events of the Holocaust that were discovered by the invading armies, ethnic or religious background of Europeans could no longer be a focus for racial thought, especially in Germany. So a new focus on skin color as *the* racial identifier became apparent as it was both easier to identify outwardly and quickly and was a common stereotypical qualifier of ability and temperament amongst most Western powers. "Blackness" was a classical European construct hailing from the colonial period when it was deemed unacceptable socially to even have an ounce of African blood, and the vehement fight against mixing races "established a strong cultural presumption of race-based nationhood, which considered blackness antithetical to a color-free German *Volk*."[62] The quality of being black was also associated with Americans peculiarly as they were the primary nation exporting black soldiers to occupied Germany. The new racial thought indicated that the fears of the supporters of mixed-race occupation children that they would be singled out and persecuted by their peers may come true, although it turned out that the *Mischlingskinder* were persecuted more by their elders trying to find a solution to getting them out of general society.[63]

Reactions to the appearance of black occupation children were varied, but often negative or unsupportive. Mothers of the children were often the first to bear the brunt of any ill will, and were sometimes blamed so far as to be traitors and diluting the race. Frequently mothers of black children lost public respect simply by virtue of who they chose to love, and were assumed to be lower-class, uneducated and poor mothers.[64] Most proved however to be dedicated to their new and perhaps unwanted families. A large percentage of mothers kept their children even if they would socially tax them or shame them, and cared for them. Very few

[62] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 82.
[63] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 76-82.
[64] Holt, "German 'Brown Babies' a Problem."

mothers of black occupation babies were able to find husbands to help care for them, either because they were unable or unwilling to marry the fathers of their children or because they were shunned by their communities for their transgression. A third of mothers of mixed-race children had put them up for adoption or into orphanages by 1952 because they could not care for them or could not handle the strain of the humiliation placed upon them.[65]

Whatever the opinion of most Germans towards the *Mischlingskinder* and the pain their mothers suffered, their development did not follow any biologically negative or inherently terrifying path, although some German scientists attempted to make it appear so. Racial studies performed on the children noted traditionally stereotypically African traits to be present when compared with white occupation children. The "Negroid biological inheritance" included "a disposition for respiratory disease…abnormalities of dental bite; long legs; lively temperaments; a marked joy in movement, including dance; and well-developed speaking abilities, with particular talents for rhythmic speech, rhyme, and imitation."[66] While on the surface this is a complimentary report that does not portray the children in a negative way, it is clearly driven by racist stereotypes and eugenicist thought. The peculiar notion of the "American Negro" also plays into the analysis of the children because the "American Negro" is supposedly a more refined mixture of African, European, and Asian breeding superior to the pure African.[67] Other studies were less racist in tone, if not intention; the *New York Times* reported that Afro-German children were very much the match of their white counterparts in

[65] Allan Gould, "Germany's Tragic War Babies: Children of Negro GI's and Frauleins Face Nazi-Like Bias as they Reach School Age," *Ebony*, December 1952, 75-8.
[66] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 90.
[67] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 90.

physical and mental ability, and that in many cases their mothers had raised them with a great devotion.[68]

Not all reactions to *Mischlingskinder* were negative; indeed, some people took pity on the many orphaned children and sought to draw the attention and compassion of the public. Director Robert Stemmle, in his 1952 film *Toxi*, brought the plight of one little girl to the forefront of the German public's attention. *Toxi* follows a well-off German family as they figure out what to do with a little black girl who is left on their doorstep in the hopes that they will take pity on and adopt her. The family is split by racist and compassionate feelings, with the younger and older generations desiring to keep Toxi and adopt her officially, while the middle generation demands that she be sent away to an orphanage as soon as possible. The film does a very good job of showing the various attitudes towards mixed-race children prevalent in Germany at the time, and even touches on the changing language of Germany. Shortly after Toxi is brought into the house out of the rain the neighbor, Anna, declares that Toxi is "a child of shame" and a part of "The Race Problem" plaguing the country.[69] She is quickly and furiously hushed by the other family members, showing how any ideas related to the racism of the Third Reich were ostensibly forgotten after the war.

Toxi elicits different reactions from many characters. Grandfather and Grandmother Rose love Toxi immediately, charmed by her wit and smiles. The father, Theodor, ostensibly rejects Toxi and bars her from his own children because she may be carrying some communicable disease, but he freely admits that it is because of her color when he is pressed by the family. Peter, the daughter's fiancée, wants to adopt Toxi when they have the money,

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[68] "Negro Children Studied: Offspring of U.S. Soldiers Are a Problem in Germany," *New York Times*, July 23, 1952.

[69] Maria Osten-Sacken, and R. A. Stemmle, *Toxi,* DVD, directed by R. A. Stemmle (West Germany: Fono-Film GmbH), 1952.

but instead uses her as inspiration for a minstrel-like caricature he paints as a chocolate bar advertisement. A woman on the street scoffs at Herta, the daughter, and Toxi as they are walking. An interesting reaction to Toxi is the one all of the children in the film give except the other *Mischlingskinder* at the orphanage; every other child's reaction to Toxi is to mock and exclude her. Theodor's young daughters call her a Moor and are curious and forceful with her, and as they are reading a storybook the younger girl continuously tells Toxi that she is the evil Moor in the story who gets killed. At the birthday party Toxi tries to include herself in the games and treats but is rebuffed repeatedly by the other children. It is only when Theodor's daughters allow her into the table and gives her a "Moor's head cupcake" that she is able to do anything. The cupcake becomes another point of ridicule, the other children telling her that "she already has a Moor's head" and again ostracizing her from the dance and games.[70] It is curious that the children have the worst reaction to Toxi's appearance in this film since most of them would not have been old enough to be fully conditioned under the Nazi education system to hate anyone who is not Aryan, although children are inclined to be insultingly curious about things that are different or new. The children are therefore indicative of their parents' views on the subject of occupation children, and display the repressed racism that adult Germans would rather not show in public.

There are three solutions that are presented in *Toxi* on how to deal with the little girl, which represent the solutions suggested by German social scientists on how to control the population of biracial children in Germany. The first, which is supported by most of the family, is to adopt her and raise her as a proper German girl. Eventually Theodor acquiesces to this plan after growing fond of Toxi and accidentally losing her after having a change of heart

[70] Osten-Sacken and Stemmle, *Toxi*.

about taking her to the orphanage. The second solution is to take Toxi to the orphanage in town, which is decided on twice and rejected by the characters twice after having a change of heart. The orphanage is a group home full of colored children, a poignant reminder to the contemporary audience of the thousands of orphaned children still waiting to find families. The orphans in *Toxi* all know a song that becomes the theme song of the movie after Toxi learns it in her time there:

> "I would like so much to go home
> To see my homeland [*Heimat*] once again
> I can't find my way on my own
> Who will love me and take me along?"[71]

The song hints at the last solution suggested to solve the problem of the occupation children: emigrating all of them back to America, where they might fit in with the large black population. This is presented as the perfect solution at the conclusion of the film, when Toxi's African-American father James Spencer enters triumphantly to take Toxi back to America and to a better life for her. She even demonstrates that she can speak English enough to pass by counting as she hugs her father. [72]

All of the Germans' solutions to the *Mischlingskinder* problem called for some form of removal of the offensive party from the general public's sight. None of them actually addressed the problem in a satisfactory way that would allow the children to grow up in a normal life to contribute to society when they were older. At a conference on the issue of the mixed-race children one woman demanded that America stop sending black troops in order to stop the birth of any more biracial German children.[73] Having spent their formative years in Germany would hardly prepare the children at all for life in America if they were shipped there. Afro-

[71] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 107.
[72] Osten-Sacken and Stemmle, *Toxi.*
[73] "Raps German's Plea to Keep Negro GI's Home," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 23, 1952.

German children in America would likely still face mockery and ostracization from their American peers for their strange accents and misunderstanding of basic American customs. The orphanage in *Toxi* is reminiscent of group homes for black German children like that of Irene Dilloo, which were established to house large numbers of black orphans to keep them from feeling different and being ostracized by their peers while waiting for an official decision to be made on whether anything drastic would be done with them.[74] These group homes, with their Christian values and motherly care, also were thought to be rehabilitative centers for children with real or perceived behavioral problems thought to stem from their ancestry, and tried to prepare the children living there with the knowledge necessary to eventually emigrate out of Germany.[75] [76]

Conclusion

The Germans recovered from the intense racism of their past quickly in an effort to distance themselves from Nazism as much as possible in as short a time as possible. The kindness of many black GIs helped to facilitate this process, especially in women and children that they came into contact with. But for many German men the presence of black soldiers was simply another humiliation echoing the French use of African colonial soldiers following

[74] "Schweitzer Aids Home: It Will Care for Illegitimate German babies of Negro GI's," *New York Times*, April 3, 1955.
[75] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 158.
[76] Curiously, at the same time that the nation was trying to get rid of its own native-born black children, Germany was attempting to attract African students to study in an exchange program. Whether this signaled a budding acceptance of blacks and the fear of the *mischlingskinder* stemmed mostly from their acting as a reminder of national failure it is difficult to say, but the opening of a potential international market beyond the occupying powers was too large to be ignored. (Albion Ross, "West Germany Wooing Africans; Seeks Negro Students, More Trade," *New York Times*, December 5, 1954.)

World War One. The influx of African-American soldiers also triggered German men and white American soldiers to "protect" German women from the supposedly bestial lust of the black soldiers, and this led to intense sexual competition between the groups. Black soldiers were truly able to connect with many German women, however, because they were not as arrogant as the white Americans, but because of the strict laws governing interracial marriage in the United States and the social barriers put in place by racist American officers very few black soldiers were able to marry their German girlfriends, and sometimes never even saw their children born. It was these occupation "brown babies" that caused consternation amongst the conservative German populace, especially as the children grew older. But there were still kind-hearted Germans who wanted to take care of the many war orphans, and some German mothers who cared for their own interracial children despite the glares and talk. Many Germans, despite the intense Nazi racism shortly beforehand, were able to put off any hatred they bore and live in peace, and it was primarily the threatened and disgraced male groups which drew on the American example and fiercely hated the new visible blacks as the scapegoat group for their woes.

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