

Brown Babies: A Thematic Analysis of Newspaper Articles Concerning Afro- German Children

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Abstract: Mischlingskinder, also referred to as brown babies were the illegitimate children of African American occupation soldiers in post-World War II Germany. The complexities of their existence are often discussed in the context of national identity, racial identity and diplomacy. Their existence in Germany presented social struggles for the children as well as their mothers as a post Nazi German began towards society of racial acceptance. A few cases, through the cooperation of both the US and German government, some of the children were eligible for adoptions by African American families in America through the Brown Baby Adoption Plan. A thematic analysis was performed on 20 archived newspaper articles to uncover the different themes in which the children are discussed. My question is whether these themes connect to a larger theoretical concept of the "priceless child". The results uncovered themes in which the brown babies were discussed which included their treatment in Germany, neglect, adoption and arrival in adoptive homes. The narratives of the children change over time in relation to the specific themes.

Keywords: Brown babies, changing value, child, themes, adoption

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INTRODUCTION

The impact of World War II had life altering implications socially and demographically. During the highest peaks of the war, people were relocated to surrounding areas or other countries completely to ensure safety. An important group amongst the individuals forced to relocate were children. The primary focus this paper is Afro-German children known as brown babies. More specifically, the paper will uncover the themes in which these children are discussed and positioned in newspaper articles. The analysis of these themes will be documented and how they change over time and their correlation to changing values of children. How we arrive at the discussion of brown babies is rather complex. It requires a discussion of occupied German war children after World War II come full circle.

The conversation on war children post World War II can be explicitly linked to Nazi Germany. The reason is because of the Germany's crusade at occupying various European countries. Norway, for example, was one of the many countries occupied by Germany during the war. The presence of German soldiers in occupied Norway resulted in relationships and children born out of wedlock (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p. 24). These women along with their children fathered by German man became a huge topic of discussion after the war. The Norwegian government post war was quite suspicious of these women and their relation to German soldiers. Norwegian woman who took refuge in Sweden was often denied entry back into Norway due to suspicion of espionage (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p. 24). Others were subjected to open scrutiny in the press and employment prejudice.

These stipulations obviously created an unfavorable situation for the children involved. Considering their fathers were German, many of these children were raised solely by their mothers in single parent homes. The woman denied entry back into Norway were forced to raise their children in foreign lands (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p.25). What you

also find is Norway and their resentment of occupation resorting to political tactic to disenfranchise their own citizens in order to disassociate them from former German presence.

The discussion of German occupation of Norway becomes more complex when examining the reasoning for the occupation. Lebensborn, which essentially served as the racial committee of Nazi German concluded the Norwegian people were of a “favorable race”. (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p.21). Homes were even established in Norway to house these women and children. (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p.21). Occupying the land would essentially ensure the continuation of the Aryan race of children of German and Norwegian ethnicity. These children and their families served as political and social pawns in forwarding the racial and diplomatic agenda of Germany. The downside however is at the end of the war; Norwegian mothers living in these homes were left homeless and shamed because of their German half-bred children (Eriksson & Simonsen, 2005, p.21).

The experience of half bred Norwegian children and their parents is to exemplify the similarities to brown babies. While brown babies were fathered by black American occupation soldiers in Germany, their German mothers experienced similar obstacles as the Norwegian mothers while living in Germany after the war. Also, government relations and policies were created between the US and Germany which also correlates the Norwegian governmental relations with Germany. A discussion of these ideas and similarities will be presented in more detail in the section titled Background.

AIM & ORGANIZATION OF PAPER

The lives of the brown babies were living examples of change in America and Germany post World War II. The shortage of empirical studies surrounding the lives of these children serves partially as a catalyst for the paper. The goal of the study is to contribute empirical research on the topic of brown babies. Through the process of thematic analysis, narratives and themes will be extracted from the 20 archived digital articles. The narratives and themes will be compared and analyzed how they change from late 1940's to mid-1970. I will then connect these narratives and themes to a larger theoretical concept of the changing value of children social value of children. My theoretical approach is based on the research of Vivian Zelizer and her work on the changing value of children in the 20th century. The idea is to answer whether these narratives in the texts coincide with the changing value of children in early 20th century and if so how do they manifest themselves.

The results of the paper subsequently provides insight into how a microcosm of the black press and national press viewed and wrote about these children. Although that isn't a primary focus of the paper, it is significant because it is one component of the complex narrative of brown babies as a whole. The study can subsequently lead to the examining of how newspapers and themes concerning children and how they relate to larger notions of children in society.

The organization and of the paper are as follows: First, a literature review. The background will begin with background information brown babies and their presence in Germany and America. Secondly will focus on the relationship between war and children. The empirical research introduced within this section will navigate the different ways in which children and war have been researched and discussed. Particular emphasis will be

placed on children being displaced or evacuated from their homes due to war. The idea is focusing on these children will theoretically contextualize the overall research concerning brown babies as some of them experienced relocation to the US. The presentation of the variety of research surrounding children and war introduce the discussion of how children are impacted by war and the differing components that contribute to such.

The theoretical basis of changing value of children in America beginning in the late 19th century will proceed. These changes identify how children transition from working and being economically useful to emotionally priceless to parents and families. These changing values of children will also be discussed in relation to adoption because of 300 brown babies experienced adoption to families in the US. Through the analysis of the texts, the paper will analyze and answers the overall aim of the paper (What are the themes uncovered? How are brown babies positioned in the text? Who do these themes and narratives change over time? How do they relate to notions of the changing value of children?). Lastly, the paper will discuss the significance of the findings along with any shortcomings and ways to improve similar research in the future.

BACKGROUND

Post-war Germany experienced a period known as Occupation. The Allied Powers divided the country in order to establish administrative control over the varying regions. (Graham- Dixon, 2013, p.79). It is reported that during the decade of 1945-1955 67, 753 children were born out of wedlock by the Allied occupation troops. Out of that number, 34, 334 were from American soldiers. (*The New York Times March 1958*). In regards to the American group, it was reported that approximately 4,776 children were fathered by African Americans. While a number of the Black soldiers wanted nothing to do with the children, a number of the soldiers wanted to begin families with their German partners. The men exemplified this by writing letters to the U.S. military requesting permission to marry their partners and to remain in Germany (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.345). As a result of the racial climate present in America in 1945, Jim Crow and anti-miscegenation laws in many of the states made their relationships illegal and prohibited. In fact, it wasn't until 1967 that anti-miscegenation was ruled unconstitutional in the Supreme Court (Lemire, 2009, p.3). Segregation was so potent even within the military that many of the officers were sent to other bases within Germany if they fathered a child with a German woman (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.345).

The politics of segregation and interracial mating created quite a peculiar situation for the black soldiers, German woman and most importantly, the children. For the first time in Germany's history, children of Afro- German descent are born into the country. These Afro-German children created a new situation in regards to race that Germany had not particularly experienced. The children were German yet their racial features ostracized them as many were subjected to racial abuse. "In other words, the national and cultural heritage of these

children was seen to be in direct contrast to their race”(Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.345)

The German government did however attempt to rectify this racial discrimination by implementing laws which made it illegal to mistreat the children based in their race. These laws enacted in the 1950's when the children became of age to attend school. Even with the anti- discrimination law, many of the mothers found living with black children challenging. The mothers were also subjected to name calling and shaming by people in German towns. These harsh circumstances led many of the women to place the children in foster homes and in extreme cases up for adoption (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.355).

The three most popular newspapers carrying stories on the children were the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Afro- American* and *Chicago Defender*. (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.348). These newspapers were locally based with a majority demographic of African Americans reading them. The articles served as a platform to inform the Black community about the situation in Germany involving Afro-German children. The newspaper articles and their coverage of brown babies would prove to be the fundamental catalyst in what would be known as the Brown Baby Adoption Plan. The initiative found its origins in 1951 as the Church World Services composed a committee of individuals from German and America (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.345). Americans (both black and white) believed it was in the children's best interest to live in America. The presence of the black community in America would give the children a sense of identity and belonging, it was believed. The purpose of the committee was to find different governmental resources between the counties that would assist in the children being transported and adopted to African- American families in the US.

The deliberations of the committee would reveal the Afro-German children were eligible for visas under the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. This visa was given to children in other European countries and required the children be under the age of ten, had been

abandoned by one or both parents or been placed for adoption (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.354). A person credited with the processing, collecting and transport of children is a woman named Mabel A. Grammer. She was a journalist and the wife of an administrative officer living in Mannheim from 1950-1954. Grammer, while living in Germany, had firsthand accounts of the treatment of the Afro- German children and corresponded frequently with the Afro- American. By the time of Grammer's return to the US, her work with the Brown Baby Adoption plan saw 350 children placed in adoptive care of African- American families (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.354).

Earlier Research Significant research has been done on World War II and its impact on the people involved. More specifically, research has focused on the impact of the war on children. One specific nation impacted by the events of World War II was Finland. One might consider Finland quite unlucky in their fortune as they would engage in conflict three times between two different nations through the duration of the war (1939-1945). The initial conflicts began with the Soviet Union during the Winter War of 1939-1940 and the Continuation War which lasted from 1941-1944. Finland in late 1944 would engage in conflict with Nazi Germany until the war's conclusion in April 1945 (Korppi- Tommola, 2008, p. 445). The Soviet Union conflict derived over territory in the eastern front called Karelia. Finland's refusal to relinquish the territory to the Soviet's would prove to have devastating consequences.

The Finnish defense of Karelia was not sufficient as it was occupied in 1939 and 1944. During these occupation periods woman and children were evacuated to neighboring towns and cities to avoid danger. It's estimated 88,000 men died during those war years leaving behind nearly 30,000 war widows and 50,000 orphans (Korppi- Tommola, 2008, p. 445). In addition, tens of thousands of children died from diseases during the Finland's war

period. Although the harsh circumstances paint a horrid picture of Finland the 1940's, there was assistance in the form of humanitarian aid from Sweden and Denmark. During the years of the war, Sweden and Denmark are estimated to have helped evacuate, house and care for roughly 70, 000 children (although Sweden is documented as caring for the bulk of the children) ((Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 446).

The children evacuated to Sweden and Denmark was a gesture that assisted Finland in the care of their children while avoiding being viewed as aiding Finland's war efforts by the Soviet Union. The families in the respective countries opened their homes to the children as very few of them lived in orphanages. The evacuated children received better health care and nutrition as food and medicine was readily available. Children from Finland were frequently sent to Sweden to received medical care, even if they weren't evacuees (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 448). While the aid of the supporting countries was appreciated, not all parties were in favor of sending the children away. Both Swedish and Finnish authorities expressed concern for the children physically in their transport by train being a safety risk while others cited concerns of possible mental health issues of Finnish children being raised in Sweden (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 446).

The conclusion of the war in 1945 presented additional issues concerning the children. The physical state of Finnish towns and cities were in complete rubble. The biological families of the evacuees did not have a home to bring the children to upon their return. Also, many of the children and foster parents became accustomed to their new families situations; often resulting in Finnish children wanting to remain in Sweden while the foster parents wanted to adopt the children. In many of the cases, children forgot their language and biological families because of how young they were when evacuated (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 449). Custody battles for the children perused in Sweden between

adoptive and biological parents. The arguments for the Swedish parents was returning the children home to unstable surrounding and unfamiliar culture would cause mental harm to the children. The lack of money and legal guidance by many of the Finnish parents influenced the Swedish court to rule in the favor of the adoptive parents (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 449). In contrast however, many Finnish families were in favor of keeping their children in Sweden because of their lack of resources and finances.

In the late 1997, a project was conducted which focused on the experiences of children who remained in Finland during the war (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 451). The objective of the project was to gain insight on the experiences of the children who remained in Finland while comparing these experiences to those evacuated. A survey was constructed and sent to the individuals (then their mid to late 70's) asking questions concerning themes such as daycare, family, housing, play, war and food (Korrpi- Tommola, 2008, p. 451). The results of the study showed a contrast between the people in cities compared to towns. The children in the cities often played less and where often hunger while the children in the countryside because of their access to crops ate enough and played. Both groups documented being afraid in the childhood of the war and having nightmares about the war throughout their adulthood. The idea is the circumstances of the war affected the wide variety of children differently and the specific living and social structures contributed to the impact.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES, QUESTIONS AND METHODS

A change in the social value of children began taking shape between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in America. Zelizer (1994) details the cultural factors that defined childhood and how they changed over the specified times period.

Correspondingly is a detailed discussion of the relationship between economic and non-economic factors impacting children's social value. What you find in examining children's social value slightly before the late nineteenth century is children having significant economic impact on family income because of their labor. However, towards the twentieth century there is a cultural shift of children leaving the factories and ultimately gaining sentimental value to their parents.

The early twentieth century is a complex and progress change in the social value of children. As the dominant economic element of children's value changes, the gradual appreciation of children's emotional value begins to take form. The structure of the family, court cases involving wrongful deaths of children and adoption are all societal structures that have been impacted by the cultural shift and are arguable reflective of such in their history. I am arguing these changes in children's social value are tangible and reflective in media narratives. The children that I examine through the text (brown babies) represent a peculiar position but their relationships America through adoption and press made them subjective to such narratives social value.

A qualitative thematic analysis was performed on newspaper articles to establish a basis of themes and narratives as they relate to brown babies. These narratives will be compared and discussed how they change over time. The three primary goals for the research

are: A) what are the themes uncovered? B) How are brown babies positioned in the text? C) Who do these themes and narratives change over time? D) How do they relate to notions of the changing value of children?).

In discussing the actual analysis, it is important that I define thematic analysis. A thematic analysis can be defined as an ‘analytical procedure centered on coding and theme development’ (Lyons & Rohleder, 2014, p. 96). As my paper deals directly with themes and narratives of a specific group of children, thematic analysis as a methodology is suitable. In addition, the flexible nature of thematic analysis allows for a variety of sources and data to be analyzed (Lyons and Rohleder, 2014, p. 97). Since my research is negotiating newspapers, a methodology which is inclusive was necessary. Lastly, the qualitative nature of my paper enables me to work with a corpus of twenty articles. In discussing the method of my research, I find it significant to mention my articles vary in form. The articles are in the format of letters to the editor, where individuals express their feelings (Grammer, 1953). The articles are also in the form of gaining information from people directly in contact with brown babies. The varying forms of newspaper articles could have impacted the analysis.

The selection of newspaper articles began after collecting information from the introduction section (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.348). The data outlined the three major newspaper circulations that ran articles on brown babies (*Pittsburgh Courier*, *the Afro-American* and *Chicago Defender*). All of these newspapers are defunct meaning they were all accessed through digital archives. With the exception of *Pittsburgh Courier* (from which I was not able to gain access to the database) 17 of the 20 articles were extracted from the aforementioned defunct newspapers. These newspapers circulations carry a rather regional scope and provided local news intended for African Americans in the respective cities. The remaining 3 were selected from the articles where *The New York Times* was selected to gather views on a national scale. Very specific combinations of search words were used to gather the

information needed for the research. For example, the search term “brown babies” under the *Chicago Defender* archival database produced 11,697 hits. Brown babies were the term used to describe all children in occupied territory born to African American fathers. In response, to filter the stories on brown babies in Germany, the follow terms were used

(Brown babies + Germany OR Germany’s brown babies OR Afro- German babies World War II)

(Mischlingskinder OR Afro German babies + occupation OR occupation babies Germany OR US occupation babies + Germany).

The application of the search term combinations were used to in each of the newspaper archive data bases. The *New York Times* yielded three articles. The *Afro-American* serves as the head of other flagship newspapers around the country. The archive database provides access to all of these newspaper articles. In the end, twelve articles were selected from the archives (seven from the *Afro American*, four from the *Baltimore Afro American* and two from *Washington Afro American*) resulting in fifteen articles in total from the *Afro American* flagships. The remaining five articles derived from *The Chicago Defender* archival database. These articles were included in the content analysis because of their relevance to the topic. A comprehensive chart is located at the end of this section and outlines title, publication, data and theme encompassing each article.

In the initial search of articles, any article containing one or more of the key terms was included in the collection. Further filtering of the data produced some articles that pertained to brown babies but not in Germany (i.e. US occupation children). After selecting articles that dealt solely with brown babies in Germany, a more explicit filtering of data was performed in regards to the content of the articles. Articles were chosen that exclusively dealt with brown babies in Germany at the time or children during, before or after their arrival in

the US. Articles that focused on the response of the German government or the maternal mothers were also included. These articles were important because they reported on the conditions and treatment of the children left in Germany which ultimately influenced American opinions. The dates of the article range from July 23, 1952 until September 14, 1974.

Once the data collection was complete, a coding method was applied. The coding method searched for collections of words or phrases that depicted and described how the brown babies were positioned in the text. The phrases selected were either in reference to a specific brown baby the story was covering or the children collectively. Phrases that were generalizations, vague or just not included (i.e. “like most growing boys” or “the kind that would delight any six year old girl”). The coding was done manually as every article was read thoroughly and terms were searched. How the children were discussed and the specific context allowed for the different themes to be uncovered. Although the titles of the articles generally gave an idea of its content, the analysis of the children and their positions in relation to the respective context gave greater insight into the articles opinions and cultural relevance.

The results obtained are from the analyzing of the coded information from the newspaper articles. The results uncovered the different thematic themes in which the children were discussed. There were categorized as Neglect of Brown Babies, Adoption, Arrival in Adoptive Homes, Treatment in Germany, and Other. Within the different themes, narratives about brown babies were uncovered. These narratives unveiled the multitude of ways in which the children were discussed in the newspaper articles but also how they changed over time. Lastly, the narratives and themes concerning the children link heavily to larger notion of changing social of value from priceless to sentimental. The following section will dissect the thematic categorizes and their narratives.

Title	Source	Date	Theme
'Negro Children Studied: Offspring of U.S. Soldiers Are a Problem in Germany'	New York Times	1952	Other Information
'Schweitzer Aids Home: It Will Care for Illegitimate German babies of Negro GI's'	New York Times	1955	Other Information
'67.753 Occupation Babies'	New York Times	1954	Other Information
'Ban Adoption By U.S. of Brown War Babies'	Chicago Defender	1949	Adoption
Howard, C, (1960) 'Ex-GI Would Adopt All Brown Babies'	Chicago Defender	1960	Adoption
'Dr. Ferebee Rips Germans on 'Brown Baby' Stand: Not a 'Negro Problem' Says Washington Medic'	Chicago Defender	1951	Neglect of Brown Babies
'Bare Neglect of Brown Babies'	Chicago Defender	1950	Neglect of Brown Babies
'Urges Aid for Brown Babies In German: Says Negroes in America Should Help'	Chicago Defender	1953	Neglect of Brown Babies
'Brown Babies: Christina Anna Comes Home',	Baltimore Afro American	1954	Arrival in Adoptive Homes
'Education of Germany's Brown Babies Is Studied'	Afro American	1952	Education
Dunnigan, A, 'Says Germany Cares for Brown Babies'	Baltimore Afro American	1954	Treatment in Germany
Grammer, Mabel,' What To Do About Adopting War Babies'	The Afro American	1953	Adoption
'First Baltimore Couple Adopt German Child'	Baltimore Afro American	1953	Adoption
Hicks, J (1953) 'No Interpretation Needed When Germany Met Brooklyn: Brown Babies make themselves at home in Jackie Robinson land'	The Afro American	1953	Arrival in Adoptive Home
'Howard, C (1960) 'Great Love for 'Brown Babies' Told'	Washington Afro American	1960	Treatment in Germany

Dornseif, G (1953) 'German Teachers Report Brown Babies Good Pupils'	The Afro American	1953	Treatment in Germany
'Brown Babies Well Treated, Dr. Thompson Tells Women'	The Afro American	1950	Treatment in Germany
Hicks, L (1953) 'D.C Couple Adopts First Brown Babies: German Girl, Boy Find New Home In Capital 'Wonderful'	The Afro American	1953	Adoption
'5 New Brown Babies Reach U.S. By Plane: N.YC Arrivals Bring To Nine Total Adoptions Aided By AFRO'	Baltimore Afro American	1953	Adoption
Stewart, O, 'Another twist to the war time 'brown baby' story'	Baltimore Afro American	1974	Other Information

RESULTS

The beginning of my analysis started after the complete corpus was collected. It was after the complete corpus was collected that I began my content analysis. The initial idea was to uncover all of themes that presented themselves. The thinking behind this method was once all of the articles were analyzed and dissected, I would have a comprehensive picture of the information and how best to present it. The idea was to place the themes in somewhat of a historical chronological order.

Chronological order in the sense that it would outline the specific times in which each event happened. For example (Chicago Defender 1950) depicts ideas of Brown babies being neglected. However, during this process (Chicago Defender 1949) written a year earlier surrounds a discussion of the brown babies in relation to adoption. The idea is differing times and themes of the articles suggest a discussion of an evolving narrative. In continuing this process, I was able to uncover exactly of the narratives change over time and how the children are positioned. The characterization of the articles included in the analysis also enabled me to identify themes and relate them to a theoretical basis of how the value of children changes over time. The following section is a compilation of all of the aforementioned.

Treatment in Germany Brown babies began coming to America through the Brown Baby Adoption Plan in the early 1950's (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.354). The major reasoning behind the initiative was based on the best interest of the child. Reports of mothers abandoning their Afro- German children and the mistreatment in orphanages led many to believe American homes were a better alternative. While that might have been the case, a different and quite contrasting dialogue was also presented through the black press. A

dialogue that displayed the Afro- German children begin treated well and how strides were being made to acclimate the children into Germany society.

An existing narrative surrounding brown babies was their likelihood at being adopted or placed in a temporary care compared to be raised by their birth mothers. On the contrast however, one article reported that ‘over 75 per cent of Germany’s 10, 000 Brown Babies live with their mothers or maternal grandmothers’ (Howard 1960). The fact of most of the brown babies remaining in Germany with their mothers creates a different narrative than earlier projected. Such a report automatically positioned the children as being objects of care from their birth mothers, despite the grief the woman received from society. Previously, the children had been positioned as in need of the care because of the blatant disregard for their best interest by their mothers and the Germany government.

The claims of brown babies treated well and taken care of were often corroborated by groups or individuals visiting Germany. Dr. Lucia E Thompson exemplified this notion when describing her experience in Germany in 1949. It was reported during her trip that ‘she saw a number of the babies. They were well cared for and her mother’s seemed proud to have them and like to put them on display for tourist to see (Afro American 1950). In terms of the black press, the agenda is making reports of the brown babies treated well in Germany give the mother’s credit for doing the right thing in times of turmoil. While the mothers consider themselves taking care of their parental duties as parents, the black press broadcast their actions to show how racial prejudice is not the norm. Once again, the children are positioned as objects within differing ideologies. As previously mentioned between nations and politics, the children are implicitly utilized to diminish racial inequality.

As the brown babies reached school age, questions began to arise. Most of the questions were concerned with how integration would impact the school atmosphere. Other

questions were concerned with whether the brown babies could perform academically in comparison to their white counterparts. In an article discussing the children entering school in Germany, the children are described as being “left behind” and a “pressing problem” for school administrations (Afro American 1952). The article further articulates how a “feeling of inferiority” will hinder the children both socially and academically. The narrative of the children being problematic has once again resurfaced as the children enter school. The article situates the children as being a problematic for German status quo as it struggles to create a place in society for the children.

In recognizing the evolving trend of brown babies attending school, the black press often corresponded with journalist stationed in Germany. Some of the initial reports of the children came after the first group of brown babies finished their first year (Dornseif 1953). The report spoke of a meeting held by teachers and school officials. The early reports concluded these individuals were successful in creating a safe and learning environment for the brown babies. ‘High praise was given to Frankfurt’s teaching staffs for their progressive methods of integration having not provoked a single case of discrimination during the first year’ (Dornseif 1953).

The success of preventing cases of discrimination in the first year speaks to the willingness of Frankfurt’s school system to accept the brown babies. Although similar practices were not practiced all over West Germany, the trend automatically creates a different narrative for the brown babies. The children having reached school age are confronted with different elements of social integration. The idea is the children prior to entering school only had to deal with the families and communities in which they were participants. Entering school subjected the children not only to the influence of the teachers but also the administrations. Preventing acts of discrimination towards the children meant they were viewed positively and the importance of their development was paramount.

In addition to issues of discrimination, much emphasis was placed on the brown babies academic performances. It is implied through most of the initial articles the children would face some difficulties in schools because of their status in society. However, much to the surprise of both the black press and Germany school officials, the children were performing exceptionally. In describing their achievements, one report stated ‘colored first graders have proved to be as intelligent as white children’ (Afro American 1953). While the comment is discriminatory by today’s standards, when taken into historical context, it explains how the brown babies performed. In regards to academics, the brown babies are placed in juxtaposition to the white German children. The accomplishments of the children, while impressive given the circumstances are only placed in reference to their white counterparts. The comparison of the children is a common theme expressed through most of the articles pertaining to academic performance.

Neglect of Brown Babies. The situation surrounding brown babies in Germany became a topic in the press during the late 1950’s in America. The primary reason behind the trend is because the children were reaching school age which sparked much discussion about what to do next. The black press however began covering the children and their situation in Germany. The concern for the children from a black press was the treatment of the children based on their race. ‘The plight of the Brown Baby in Germany is an unusual one and promises a bleak future for children fathered by American Negro GI’s because of the difficulty integrating them into color-less citizenry’(Chicago Defender 1950). The children are perceived to be in social danger and at risk of social persecution if they remain in Germany.

The lack of publicity and discussion of the brown babies in the early 1950’s suggested there was an intentional lack of action taken by America to address the circumstances of the children. ‘Seemingly little is being done to alleviate the “brown baby” problem (Chicago Defender 1950). The brown babies are positioned as being a problem because of America’s

supposed unwillingness to recognize the children. The racial component of the brown babies was an aspect that was heavily emphasized in the black press in relation to White children born to White GI's. 'White babies left by Caucasian GI (sic) do not present a great problem because their skin color will not be alien to the people of Germany' (Chicago defender 1950). Once again, the brown babies are placed within the racial context of America in the 1950's which notoriously discriminated against Black people. The black press placed the Afro-German children into their racial understandings because of their connections to African American GI's. The comparison to the children's white counterparts further emphasizes the notion.

The following years would prove to be pivotal in the exposure of the brown babies in Germany. Black leaders and groups would begin urging black Americans to begin aiding these Afro- German children abroad. Similar views were shared by German leaders looking to find a solution for the children. Ursula Manu, a German director of the World Brotherhood movement stated "They are American children as well as German children. So why don't Negro people do something over here about it (Chicago Defender 1953)! The dialogue surrounding the children has become one of claiming and responsibility. Black Americans felt a sense of responsibility for the children because of the Black GI's fathering them. The response to the urging of aid for the children would be impactful; particularly in the form of adoption.

Adoption The adoption plan to send Afro- Germany children to America was not initially accepted as a plausible alternative. The outrage at the idea of sending children born from Black GI's to the US began with the British in 1949 (Chicago Defender 1949). The Home office issued a statement declaring "any implication that there is not a place in this country for colored children who have not a normal life would cause controversy and give offence in some quarters" (Chicago Defender 1949). Similar sentiments would be shared in

Germany as the welfare authorities in Heidelberg and Manheim stopped the transferring of 134 Afro-German babies to the US (Chicago Defender 1949). The reluctance of Germany to send the children to America initially is due in part to England's influence in Europe during the time. As the topic of brown babies was new, Germany in their occupied state were not in a position to spearhead such a diplomatic decision.

The influence of England on Germany on the topic of brown babies can also be attributed to the large presence of British occupation in the late 1940's. The initial stages of the adoption process place the children in quite difficult positions. The complexities of postwar Germany and England make the children pieces in a diplomatic war. England makes very clear their sole reason behind not sending the children away is to avoid the notion blacks could not live peacefully in England. Germany on the other hand seems to be following along as they attempt to establish similar trends of racial equality post Hitler. The early reports in the articles fail to discuss the children in regard to their humanistic components or their specific physical conditions in Germany. The children are essentially positioned as tangible incentives to be kept or traded depending on how the countries can benefit. Germany however loosens up its opinions on ban as hundreds of children would be adapted away to America in the following decade.

Six of the articles analyzed deal implicitly or explicitly with the notion of adoption. One of the main purposes of the articles in the African American based newspapers was to persuade Black couples to open up their homes to adopting the Afro-German babies. Mabel Grammer, a person living in Germany during occupation and writing articles for the Afro-American wrote many articles surrounding adoption. Her central role as one of the primary liaisons for the adopting process enabled her to write descriptive articles detailing the specific procedures and paper work needed to complete the adoption process (Grammer, 1953).

The great detail in describing the adoption process and the amount of money it would take to adopt a child was to ensure people interested were committed to adopting these children. Grammer writes ‘If AFRO readers are patient and meet the requirements of the State Department and German authorities, it is possibly to have a youngster in your home’ (Grammer 1953). In addition, because of the surplus of letters asking about the children, articles similar to these were used to answer any questions regarding the children and the process. The idea in these types of articles is to express the need for black couples to adopt these children.

The position of the children within this article and other similar ones is reflective of those motives. The children are positioned in ways that depict them in dire need for homes in America. A caption under one of the pictures reads ‘Jonosch Monsee smile at the chance to come to America’ (Grammer 1953). It is unclear whether the chance to come to America is the reason for the child’s smile but the purpose of the articles perpetuates the idea. Other notions present regarding the children depict them as deserving of a home in America. A caption under another picture in the article speaks of a German mother who ‘is anxious for some nice American family to adopt her daughter so that her tot can have a better break in life’ (Grammer, 1953). The quote speaks directly to the emotions of how deserving the children to have homes in America. It is also implied through the dialogues of needy and deserving children that America is a greater alternative compared to the current situation in Germany.

In contrast however, there were some opinions that did not coincide with the notion of the children being wanted in America. As one reader wrote to the Afro American “Do not allow yourself to be kidded. American does not want the brown babies either. It is hard for a colored couple to adopt one” (Grammer 1953). The individual goes on to describe how strenuous the process is for adopting a brown baby. The writer speaks particularly to how

bureaucratic the process has to deal with both the Displaced Persons Bureau and the German authorities. The writer later speculates the difficulty attached to the process is done intentionally to discourage couples from adopting the children. These views are reflective of many couples who were often penalized and for incomplete or incorrect documentation required for the adoption. These occurrences created negative feelings about adopting brown babies amongst many African American couples.

Despite the small number of people that expressed grievances with the adoption process, the Brown Baby Adoption plan was successful in adopting over 350 brown babies to black couples stationed in the US or residing in the US. These stories were often detailed and followed one specific child or a pair of children being adopted into the same family. . One particular article followed the journey of a young child named Christina Anna. The analysis of this particular article and similar ones reveal the descriptive positioning of the brown babies. Christina Anna is described as “waiting patiently” and smiling sweetly” as she awaits the arrival of her mother (Afro American 1954). The piece also mentions how Christina Anna is the 35th child to have gone through the adoption process. The purpose of the article is double fold as its attempts to display the positive emotions and feeling attached to the children while expressing the success rate of the adoption program. The topic of adoption was a popular theme in connection with the brown babies. Most notably because of the large initiative created to adopt the children to American families. A large portion of these article expressed relatively positive views about the children and the notion of them being adopted. These articles often go into detail about the adoptive parents and the happiness these parents expressed with having the children in their home. The negative views, as mentioned previously, stemmed from the adoption process. These views, though limited, expressed a section of the population viewed the process an acquisition of the children troublesome.

Arrival in Adoptive Homes The adoptions themselves narrate only a fraction of themes present in the articles. A common theme found amongst the articles covered the children after they had arrived and lived in the new homes. The concern for the children after their arrival in the US was how well they adjusted to their new surroundings. In one particular article, a journalist and a photographer go to the home of a newly adopted pair of children in Brooklyn (Hicks 1953). The children, Johan and Mary Louise quickly became friends with the neighborhood children and often went outside and played with them during the summer days. Although the children were quite shy and reserved initially, the children quickly found their niche in the group of children. The article describes at great length how the children played with the other children in the area and how “language was no barrier” for the children to connect with one another (Hicks 1953). The Afro- German children are positioned in quite a resilient and active position. Placing the story into context, these children along with countless others have switched homes and cultures and very young ages. While language is assumed to be a social barrier for these children, the article depicts them as being triumphant in the transition. The positive attributes of the children are documented in addition to the children being active participants in their adjustments.

In another article, highlighting the first Afro- German child adopted in Baltimore tell the story of 6 year old Robert. The article describes the enjoyment that Robert is experiencing but also the happiness he has brought to his new family. In regards to potential language barriers as mentioned previously ‘so far his new parents and the children in which he plays with experience little difficulty in understanding what he means’ (Afro American 1953). The reoccurring theme of language not presenting a barrier for the children was quite prevalent and often documented. These adjustments made by the children were often depicted as positive attributes from the children and were received well in the newspapers.

The articles made it a point to highlight the humanitarian efforts that contributed to the success of the adoption initiative. In one particular article highlighting the arrival of five brown babies in New York City, special thanks was given to Scandinavian Airlines for their help in transporting of the from Hamburg to New York (Afro Baltimore 1953). The Swedish airlines company made an agreement with the State Department and German authorities to fly the child to America for half the price. Others forms of kindness the children received was week long trips away to Denmark in the summer time. The significance of such an act displays the concern for these children that went beyond the confines of Germany and America. The acts also display how outsiders not directly involved with the brown babies were willing to give assistance.

The last notion in reference to the children in their adoptive homes is their national identities. The German identity of the children was an aspect of the relationships understood both by the parents and the children. While the children began learning English upon their arrival in America, they often used German to express their excitement or speak to the other adoptive child if their existed one (Afro American 1953). Simultaneously however, as the children adapt to their lives in America, they are perceived as also developing an American identity. The article later describes Robert as ‘adjusting to American foods and eating like normal youngster’. The importance of the quote lies in the perception of the children, despite previous circumstances, were quite ordinary and even American. The positive positioning is a change from the initial connection the adoptive parents had with their children which was solely grounded in the blackness the children possessed. The children developing an American identity is a narrative that is perpetuated throughout the articles to show their growth in connection to the black community but also America at large.

Other Information The vast majority of the articles analyzed exhibited specific themes in their reporting of brown babies. There was however a few articles which did not fall under

any specific category. The piece, stemming from the New York Times, attempts to objectively report on the Afro German children. One article simply reports the number of occupation children born in Germany from 1945-1955 (New York Times 1958). The statistics go into further analysis as they give percentages and numbers of occupation children from US, British and French soldiers. The reason such an article was included in the analysis and coding is because of the different narrative it presents. While the other articles are seemingly drenched in thematic overtones, this particular article's agenda lies in the numbers. A conclusion can be drawn that the large amount of children reported as 'occupation babies' (67,753) is implemented to install validity into the claim and bring awareness to the birthing of children in occupied territory.

The awareness of brown babies in America was followed by humanitarian efforts in different forms. Within the black community, money, toys and goods were sent to the children living in orphanages. One particular instance of humanitarian assistance saw the construction of a home specifically for brown babies living near Wuppertal. The construction of the home was initiated by Dr. Albert Schweitzer, an American physician and writer (*New York Times* 1955). The home is considered the first home exclusively made for the children because of the racial ostracizing within general orphanages. The importance of the home and its construction is the notion that America is recognizing the brown babies and their situation in Germany. The reports coming to the US position the children in need of assistance. More importantly, the home is representative of how the situation was viewed as an American problem and not just an African-American problem. Most of the reports on the issue covered only what black leaders and groups were contributing to the brown babies. Albert Schweitzer's contributions represented how America was responsible for providing assistance for the children, as expressed in the article.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to discuss the different narratives within the specific themes and connect those themes to the changing social value of children. In the section Treatment in Germany, there is a clear variation in how brown babies are positioned. Early reports from the 1950's depicted the children in need of homes as their birth mothers were abandoning them and their treatment in orphanages was poor. However, a later report from nearly a decade later (Howard, 1960) states a majority of mothers kept and raised their children. An article even from 1950 detail a visit from a black doctor who was visiting German impressed by how well the children were treated. The idea is narratives are always changing whether over a period of time or currently as shown here.

The importance in detailing these differences is the narrative of the children being in need of better homes assisted in the creation of the Brown Baby Adoption Plan (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.354). This offers an entry point in the discussion of how these themes connect to notions of changing social value in children. The Brown Baby Adoption Plan is arguably a reflection of an already evolving trend of children being protected through policy making. America in the early 20th century began enacting laws prohibiting children from labor and validating the sentimental value they hold within their families (Lemke Muniz de Faria, 2003, p.354). The Brown Baby Adoption Plan exemplifies this because it seeks to place these children in caring homes.

A narrative of brown babies being neglected. The discussion however is framed around the racial acceptance of the German society and its potential unwillingness to include these brown children (Chicago Defender 1950). This particular narrative also targeted the US government citing its unwillingness to acknowledge and aid the brown babies in Germany. The varying narrative however detailed the Frankfurt school system implementing racial

equality laws in their schools (Dornseif 1953). Once again, even within a shorter period of time we find a change in the narrative in how the children are discussed. One narrative fears the future for the children because of their race while the others paint a picture of steps towards racial acceptance

Education as it relates to brown babies presents the connection of how the theme of neglect relates to changing social value of children. Significant emphasis is placed on the academic performance of brown babies in one article (Dornseif 1953). The article details the efforts taken by the Frankfurt school system to create a safe learning environment for the children. The changing social value of children narrative depicts quite a similar notion as children transitioned from laboring to academics in the late 19th and early 20th century (Zelizer, 1994, p.71). The idea is education as a benchmark for change in social value of children existed decades prior to brown babies. Brown babies attending schools reflects these new values associated with children.

The adoption of brown babies and their existence in adoptive homes reflect notions of the changing social value of children. A common narrative of the articles pertaining to adoption was these children would have a better chance in homes in America (Afro American 1954). The articles also depicted how the children were in their first months in their adoptive homes (Grammer, 1953). While this might be the case in these articles, adoption in the US did not always have the best interest of the child. . In the early to mid-nineteenth century, babies were not considered profitable. In fact, a market of getting rid of unwanted babies existed in the forms of baby farms (Zelizer, 1994, p. 171).

By the 1870's however, child welfare services around the country began campaigning for "genuine homes" for unwanted children to be loved and cherished (Zelizer, 1994, p.176). Baby farms were becoming unfavorable to child welfare services sought after alternative

homes and orphanages for dependent children (Zelizer, 1994, p. 177). The idea is as the notions of children changed so did adoption. Adoption became a means to provide children with safe homes and with caring and loving families. It should also be mentioned that families in turn paid for the love and care of these children, contrasting their notions of solely economic worth.

The research on brown babies is still quite limited. Such limitations however leave space for more in depth research on these children and their lives. One possible method for obtaining further knowledge on brown babies would be a detailed content analysis of the children from a German perspective. As most of the children were raised in Germany, important information can be uncovered surrounding the German positioning of the children in the media. Research can also be conducted on the educational and social systems in place and how they impacted the lives of brown babies. The children are representative both a social and governmental change in Germany post World War II. An examination of these factors on the lives of brown babies could prove vital in furthering our knowledge on their lives.

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