Reflections:
American Opinions of Germans in the American Occupation Zone, 1944-1949

by

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ABSTRACT

The period of the American occupation of Germany from 1944 to 1949 has been and remains an area of keen interest for historians. It has been studied from the perspective of the decision-makers of the American regime, as well as from the view-point of the ordinary German. Until now, the opinions of the average American soldier have not been examined. Given the great degree of latitude accorded to individual Americans at all levels of the occupational administration, their opinions were influential and helped shape the tone and, in some instances, the policies of the occupation.

This thesis examines the opinions of the average Americans who were members of the American army of occupation in Germany at this time. Using discourse theory as a theoretical framework for this study, several key issues of the occupation will be analyzed through the lens of the average American's experience in Germany. Those issues discussed include democratization, denazification, fraternization and charity. The analysis that follows reveals that Americans cared more about their own interests and the issues that affected their daily lives than anything else. Furthermore, acting as a mirror into American society in post-war Germany, their opinions also expose the various divisions that existed between the ranks, genders, races, and age groups that composed the American military forces in Germany.

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Introduction

Death. Destruction. Starvation. Poverty. Crime. The collapse of traditional morality. Chaos. The essence of the German "zero hour," these were the harsh realities of everyday life in Germany that the American soldier encountered as he swept across Germany in late 1944 and early 1945. Indeed, the experiences and perceptions of American personnel during the entire Allied occupation of Germany were governed by the material conditions that they encountered within the broken and defeated land. However, other factors and concerns also influenced the average American in Germany during this time. The goal of this study is to find out what these factors were.

The history of public opinion is an enterprise that attempts to uncover the ideas and notions of potentially diverse groups of people during a given moment in time. It is firmly within this tradition that this study of beliefs held by American occupiers in Germany after the Second World War will be undertaken. What immediately follows is a brief account of certain historiographical trends concerning the American occupation and the history of American public opinion vis-à-vis Germans. The study will deal with the various preoccupations in each of these strains of historical literature and will address several key theoretical issues.

This study subscribes to two guiding assumptions. First, it suggests that public opinion says more about the group holding the opinions than about the subject of the opinions itself. Consequently, while opinions about a topic, in this case the German people, are important, they are not the only information gleaned from an analysis of public opinion. Second, it is based on the assumption that being able to control people's thoughts leads to power. As such, the ideas and preoccupations of American occupation

troops will be examined through the lens of The Stars and Stripes opinion columns, "Mail Call" and "The B Bag," with particular reference to opinions about the German people. By examining the conflicts within these pages, a clear pattern of resistance and regulation will unfold; conflicts which underpinned the very motives and actions of Americans in Germany.

The history of the American occupation of Germany after the Second World War is the first of two historiographical bodies of work that inform this study. The literature follows a pattern that echoes the increasing specialization within the historical field as a whole. Initially, the topic was covered in a general history format by a number of ex-servicemen or occupation officials who had served in Germany during the official occupation period from May 1945 to September 1949.[1] These monographs were generally based on the standard sources of traditional political history, including government memoranda and papers, interviews with political and military elites, as well as memoirs of the leading personalities in the occupation, all of which was mobilized to construct accounts that detail a far-reaching and intrusive occupation. Perhaps unintentionally serving partially as personal histories, these works cover numerous aspects of the occupation period, with a particular emphasis on political and diplomatic factors, in an attempt to assess the overall success of the exercise. Such evaluations are

[1] For examples of these accounts, see: Julian Bach, America's Germany: An Account of the Occupation (New York: Random House, 1946); Harold Zink, The United States in Germany: 1944-1955 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1957); Eugene Davidson, The Death and Life of Germany: An Account of the American Occupation (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959); John Gimbel, A German Community under American Occupation: Marburg, 1945-1952 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961); Franklin M. Davis Jr., Come as a Conqueror: The United States Army's Occupation of Germany, 1945-1949 (New York: MacMillan Co., 1967); and Edward N. Peterson, The American Occupation of Germany: Retreat to Victory (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1977). While the writings of some of these men, such as Davis, seem to lack the hallmarks of historical research (i.e. proper citing of sources and reference to the historical literature on the subject), ex-Military Government officials like Peterson and Gimbel have become accomplished historians in their own right.

generally mixed; most of these authors conclude that the efforts of Americans were hindered by the scope of their actions[2] and that when they attempted less, they accomplished more.[3]

What the historians have done is to impose a specific kind of periodization upon the events of the occupation, marking off periods that are generally delineated by major policy decisions or events. These chronologies are supposed to act as a guide towards interpreting the occupation years as a whole. Most historians mention the implementation of Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive (JCS) 1067 (April 1945) as the beginning of a phase which was marred by American vindictiveness as well as being inspired by a tendency to arrange the complete restructuring of German society.[4] This period showed signs of ending with United States Secretary of State James Byrnes' famous Stuttgart speech in the fall of 1946. However, historians contend that it was not until the summer of 1947, with the issuance of JCS 1779, that the Americans officially abandoned their punitive policy in favour of rehabilitating the German society and economy.[5] Although positive in many ways, the post-1947 period is generally seen as a transition time when the Germans were no longer viewed as enemies but not yet seen as allies. There was no clear indicator to mark the end of this period. Sometime during the blockade of Berlin and the resultant airlift that lasted from 1948 to 1949, the democratic rehabilitation of the West Germans is

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[2] Zink, United States in Germany, 356.
[3] Peterson, Retreat to Victory, 352.
[4] Zink, United States in Germany, 94. See also, Konrad H. Jaurasch, "Huns, Krauts or Good Germans? The German Image in America, 1800-1980," in German American Interrelations: Heritage and Challenge, ed. James F. Harris (Tubingen, Germany: Tubingen University Press, 1985), 155 and Robert Gerald Livingston, "Germany's Role in America's Containment Mission: 1945-1954," in German American Interrelations: Heritage and Challenge, ed. James F. Harris (Tubingen, Germany: Tubingen University Press, 1985), 115.
[5] Davidson, Death and Life, 170.

thought to have begun, at least in the eyes of Americans.[6] This period lasted at least until the entry of the Federal Republic of Germany into NATO in 1955. Although these periods were accompanied by fierce policy battles between various groups within the United States government, factions which continued to support either a policy of severe punishment or the rehabilitation of a potential ally beside whom the U. S. could wage the Cold War, they are generally agreed upon as fixed boundaries, giving the impression of a relatively even transformation from hatred to reconciliation.

Grouping the historians into a single category is somewhat misleading, however, as there was vigorous debate among them. Often the works of later authors revised much of what was written before. For example, eschewing the previous historical orthodoxy regarding the incoherent and indeterminate nature of American policy in the occupation zone, John Gimbel maintains that American self-interest provided coherence and continuity to the implementation of American policy.[7] Another example of these revisionist tendencies involves the work of Edward Peterson. In his account of the occupation, Peterson attempts to resolve the debate about whether American initiatives in the occupation zone represented continuity with, or a break from, recent German history. By suggesting a combination of the two, he abandons the dichotomous comparison and suggests another alternative.[8]

During the 1970's, the period in which general histories enjoyed a high degree of popularity amongst historians came to a close. What followed was an increasing interest in specific aspects of the occupation. Political and military historians continued to dissect

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[6] Ibid., 182.
[7] Gimbel, American Occupation, 249.
[8] Peterson, Retreat to Victory, 339.

the debates around American policy decisions regarding Germany, although applied more focus to a number of narrow topics. Particular attention was paid to the abandoned Morgenthau Plan that called for the partition and permanent "pastoralization" of Germany, and had been developed by the American Treasury Secretary, Henry Morgenthau. Historians have emphasized this plan as a reflection of public opinion, as well as examining the role it played in the formation of American occupation policy. In an authoritative work on the subject, combining analysis with a number of published documents, Warren Kimball concludes that Morgenthau's plan was completely abandoned by mid-1945 save for its harshly punitive spirit,[9] which was embodied in JCS 1067. Earl F. Ziemke, in his discussion of the plan, seems to support this conclusion,[10] while John Gillingham also notes the less-than-direct connection between the Morgenthau Plan and the JCS directive.[11]

Perhaps the most glaring departure from this evolving consensus comes from a very unusual source. Specifically, newspaper publisher James Bacque has come forth to challenge the historical orthodoxy on the matter in a rather historically unorthodox way. Using conspiratorial claims, and without resorting to the texts of either the Morgenthau Plan or the policy outlined in JCS 1067, Bacque claims that the Morgenthau Plan was indeed carried out during the occupation of Germany, and that this was done in a vengeful manner aimed at crippling the German economy and starving the German

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[9] Warren F Kimball, Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-1946 (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1976), 59.

[10] Earl F. Ziemke, "Erwin L. Hunt, Henry J. Morgenthau, Jr. and German-American Relations After Two Wars," ed. Hans Trefousse, Germany and America: Essays on Problems of International Relations and Migration (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1980), 235.

[11] John Gillingham, "From Morgenthau Plan to Schumann Plan: America and the Organization of Europe," in American Policy and the Reconstruction of West Germany, ed. Jeffry Diefendorf, et al (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 113.

people.[12] Resorting to simplified notions about the battle between good, embodied in the personage of the humanitarian ex-President Herbert Hoover, versus evil, represented by the US commander in Europe, General Dwight Eisenhower, Bacque disregards the majority of the historical literature on the occupation period.[13] Specifically, he ignores the fact that the literature shows Americans to have had a rehabilitative streak or at least to have developed one in order to fend off the threat of communism. Rather, his own interpretation on the matter is that there was a sustained campaign aimed at extracting vengeance at the expense of the Germans.[14] Perhaps the biggest flaw in his argument regarding the "attempted starvation" of the German populace is that he fails to mention any of the means Germans utilized to supplement their diets. Completely overlooking such methods as foraging, black market exchanges, begging from the Americans and gardening, Bacque uses statistics on the amount of allotted calories during the period that were taken from the official 1945-1946 British and American records.[15] These records are a faulty source, because they provide an incomplete understanding of the true situation. A lack of knowledge regarding conditions in Germany, combined with a clear ignorance about the historiography on the matter, renders Bacque's claims about the Morgenthau Plan naïve at best and grossly inaccurate at worst.

Diverging from the traditional areas of research, much of the historical literature on the occupation period written after the 1960's was inspired by social and cultural perspectives, a development that followed the general trend toward increased

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[12] James Bacque, Crimes and Mercies: The Fate of German Civilians Under Allied Occupation, 1944-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company Ltd., 1997).
[13] Ibid., 194.
[14] Ibid., 112 and 133-134.
[15] Ibid., 159.

specialization in the discipline. Since the opinions of American and German elites had already been covered, social historians have attempted to uncover dissenting voices, especially German ones. This body of work builds on the legacy of the earlier period that also chronicled German dissent.[16] Resorting to public opinion polls, government records and newspaper articles, many of these accounts have tried to show German resistance or agency in the face of Allied, and especially American, domination. Beginning with the Merritts' analysis of the Allied-conducted German public opinion polls,[17] social historians have repeatedly shown a tendency toward German resistance to American rule.

Some of the work in this area has focused upon the roles and hardships of German women. An interesting example of such work comes from Atina Grossmann. Although the primary goals in her article "A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers," are to place the voices of German rape victims within the larger context of the post-war, German narrative of victimization, and to offer insights into Nazi and Weimar social policies, Grossmann also shows that women were more than just victims. She illustrates the agency that women showed during the gross indignities that were heaped upon them, mainly by the Russian soldiers. Grossmann relays the women's accounts, describing their heroic defiance of their attackers.[18] While the work of social and gender historians has added greatly to recovering German voices, the thoughts of

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[16] See Gimbel's discussion of German resistance to and outright abandonment of American changes in the local history of the university town of Marburg in John Gimbel, A German Community under American Occupation: Marburg, 1945-1952 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961). Also look at the discussions of the relatively minor impact of American rule in four different German communities in Chapter Seven of Peterson, Retreat to Victory, 271-338.

[17] Anna J. Merritt and Richard L. Merritt, eds., Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys, 1945-1949 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[18] Atina Grossmann "A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers," in West Germany under Construction: Politics, Society and Culture in the Adenauer Era, ed. Robert G.Moeller (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 43.

American troops involved with the occupation have been left relatively unexplored. The recovery of the opinions and preoccupations of Americans in Germany is something that will be attempted here.

The defiance shown in much of the social history of the period speaks to a greater phenomenon that properly belongs under the rubric of cultural history: that of Americanization. Although most of the historians of this phenomenon frame it within the larger context of the Americanization of Europe,[19] stressing that this process was not simply one of American imposition and blind German acceptance,[20] it is not essential to see the process exclusively in these terms. A highly nebulous and often ill-defined term, Americanization can be used here to describe a complex process of importing and instituting American values and ideals through a whole host of methods. While certain historians have focused on American cultural imports, such as films, newspapers and consumer goods,[21] little attention has been paid to personal interactions between the Germans and their occupiers, although this certainly served as a way of transmitting cultural messages and symbols. Furthermore, this process has been linked to notions of cultural imperialism, anti-Americanism and modernization, concepts which gain

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[19] Reinhold Wagnleitner, "American Cultural Diplomacy, the Cinema and the Cold War in Central Europe," European Contributions to American Studies, 28 (1994):197; Uta Poiger, "Beyond "Modernization" and "Colonization,"" Diplomatic History, 23 (1999): 45.

[20] Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "Art is Democracy and Democracy is Art: Culture, Propaganda and the Neue Zeitung in Germany, 1944-1947," Diplomatic History, 23 (1999): 22.

[21] For an examination of the role film played in the process, see, Gerd Gemünden, Framed Visions: Popular Culture, Americanization and the Contemporary German and Austrian Imagination (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998); Wagnleitner, "American Cultural Diplomacy," 196-210; Heide Fehrenbach, "Cinema, Spectatorship and the Problem of Postwar German Identity," in The American Impact on Postwar Germany, Reiner Pommerin, ed. (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1995), 165-195. For the role of newspapers see Gienow-Hecht, "Art is Democracy," 21-43. And for the impact of consumer goods, see Erica Carter, "Alice in the Consumer Wonderland: West German Case Studies in Gender and Consumer Culture," in West Germany under Construction: Politics, Society and Culture in the Adenauer Era, Robert G. Moeller, ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 347-371.

increasing importance when looked at within the context of American efforts and opinions in their zone of occupation.[22]

Taking a broad look at German society throughout the occupation period and beyond, the effects of this so-called Americanization are wide-ranging. They vary from successful measures, such as an overhaul of the political system and a change in the consumer culture of the nation, to measures that fell short of expectations, such as the makeover of the German education system and the denazification process in general. Perhaps what is most striking is the extent to which Americans tried to change the very social character of their zone, and eventually all of West Germany. This ranged from influencing the research methods of German sociology to altering the structure and ideals of German industry to reorienting the minds of German children. Indeed, such efforts were akin to changing German *Kultur*, a term that tends to apply to all aspects of German life, be it cultural (in the more modern sense), political, social, military, scientific, industrial. Richard Merritt argues that the American occupation can be viewed as a "modified [albeit benevolent attempt at] colonization," aimed at completely altering German society, primarily through the democratization effort.[23] Thus the occupation efforts designed to change German society can also be tied into the more general notion of cultural imperialism, suggesting an early resumption of the Americanization process of Germany and Europe that began much earlier.

The second area of historical research that has shaped the theoretical underpinnings of this study is the history of American public opinion and, more

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[22] Poiger, "Beyond 'Modernization,' " 46.
[23] Richard L. Merritt, Democracy Imposed (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 5 and 15.

specifically, the history of American opinions about the German people. There are several theoretical aspects within this body of work that inform and will help to structure discussion in the following chapters.

First, the historical accounts in this area of historiography have emphasized the personal interplay between Americans and Germans. Along with the use of newspapers as a source of public opinion, historians charting the opinions of Americans have also relied on personal recollections of interactions between individuals. Historians of the early nineteenth century have paid attention to such sources as the travel diaries of Americans visiting the Old World to gauge how American elites perceived Germans.[24] Other accounts of the Weimar era have emphasized the impressions of US ambassadors and diplomatic representatives with regard to their individual dealings with German officials within Germany.[25] Thus, unlike the literature of the occupation era, the historiography of American public opinion has a tradition of utilizing personal accounts.

Relating this trend to the occupation period, it can be said that many of these images of the typical German were constructed through these same kinds of interactions. However, it must be added that the nature of many of these interactions was quite narrow. The predominant type of interactions between Americans and Germans at this time took place between soldiers and German women, as evidenced by the high levels of American-

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[24] Hermann Wellenreuther, " "Germans Make Cows and Women Work:" American Perceptions of Germans as Reported in American Travel Books, 1800-1840," in Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776, eds. David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 41-63.

[25] Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, "Between Hope and Skepticism: American Views of Germany, 1918-1933," in Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776, eds. David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 191- 216.

German births and cases of venereal disease throughout the occupation.[26] Other types of social interactions took place largely between American soldiers and children, either in the form of charity or through the German Youth Activities (GYA) organization. All other forms of social interaction were either sparse or non-existent, perhaps due to the fact that the American forces in Germany often segregated themselves from the rest of the German population by exclusively circulating within the confines of their walled and guarded communities, as in the case of Frankfurt, until May 1948.[27]

Other interactions with Germans were of a more formal nature, and as such were restricted in scope. Specifically, many Americans had their contact with Germans limited to the indigenous personnel who worked in their offices or in the mess halls they frequented. Others had interactions with the prisoners of war they guarded. Officers had German maids and other employees, as did officers' families after they arrived in April 1946. Since it was illegal for most of the occupation forces to buy goods directly from German merchants, that avenue of contact was cut off to more scrupulous American personnel. Black market activity was rampant during the occupation, although relationships in that forum were most likely more businesslike than friendly and cordial. As a result, the majority of Americans in Germany had a limited range of experience from which to draw in order to form their perceptions of Germans.

At the risk of simplification, we can assume that stereotypes of foreigners are usually mixed. George Nagler has described American perceptions of Germans from the completion of German unification in 1870 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914 as

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[26] The number of American-German children born out of wedlock has been estimated at anywhere from 30,000 to 93,000.

[27] Davidson, Death and Life, 259-260.

ambivalent.[28] He asserts that this tumultuous love-hate relationship was partially the result of American self-interest. Specifically, he claims that when American and German interests did not clash, Americans were favourably disposed towards the Germans. However, Nagler also maintains that when interests came into conflict, public opinion was skewed as a result.[29]

Perceptions of Germans during the occupation period were governed by similar factors. Specifically, certain individual Germans, like women and children, were looked upon favourably by many occupation personnel. They enjoyed the dubious benefits of fraternization much sooner than the occupation authorities of American Military Government (AMG) permitted and were often given food, candy and other material goods. However, when members of these groups over-stepped their bounds by taking advantage of American supplies or facilities denied to certain kinds of American personnel in Germany, or they took advantage of the affections of Americans in general, they were vilified and looked upon as interlopers. Guilty of presumptuousness, these individuals were then treated like the rest of their peers, who were constantly viewed under the glare of suspicion.

These supposed German abuses shed light on a dynamic that was to influence the entire period. Although there remained a hard line, core group that consistently viewed all Germans as disdainful, most Americans who lived in Germany during the occupation did not see matters so harshly. In fact, though the majority of Americans who lived in

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[28] Jorg Nagler,"Changing American Perceptions of Imperial Germany, 1870-1914," in Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776, eds. David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 131-154. See also, Hans W. Gatzke, Germany and the United States: A "Special Relationship?" (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 57.
[29] Nagler, "Changing American Perceptions," 134-135.

Germany during this time believed in the offensiveness of Germans in general, they found some individual Germans to be quite decent and respectable. This group versus individual dynamic manifested itself in various ways, such as the American habit of consorting with German women and children. However, the power of these individual relationships was not necessarily, as Hans Gatzke has claimed, likely to create a basis for a better understanding of the German people.[30] Rather, these links provided the exception that supposedly proved the rule, as American occupiers generally viewed Germans with derision. In both words and tone, the majority of the rank and file consistently spoke in xenophobic terms; thus, "they could resent the German people collectively but still like them individually."[31]

Some historians of public opinion have suggested that such modes of perception reflect the thoughts, ideas and preoccupations of their bearers much more than any external reality. Over seventy-five years ago, John Gerow Gazely made this observation in his study of American public opinion about German unification, calling his theory "self-enhancement."[32] This theory continues to hold sway amongst historians to this day, such as Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt and David Barclay.[33]

The occupation experience seems to suggest the truth of the "self-enhancement" notion, as Americans had numerous and often negative opinions regarding Germans. However these opinions said more about the Americans themselves than about any reality

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[30] Hans W. Gatzke, "The United States and Germany," Current History, 38 (1960), 9.
[31] Petra Goedde, "From Villains to Victims: Fraternization and the Feminization of Germany, 1945-1947," Diplomatic History, 23 (1999), 5.
[32] John Gerow Gazley, American Opinion of German Unification 1848-1871 (New York: Longmann, Greens and Co., 1926), 519.
[33] David E. Barclay, and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, "Introduction," in Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776, eds. David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1.

involving their German subjects. By accepting the distinction between reality and perception, with perception being created by the "social reality" in which an individual is immersed,[34] this theory can negate the value of public opinion if the goal of the researcher is to develop a realistic account of the objects (the Germans) that the subjects (the Americans) perceive. This is not to say that the history of public opinion has no meaning or value; indeed far from it. Problems with the refractory and distorted nature of perception are the primary reason why the underlying level of self-referentiality must be emphasized.

Perhaps departing further from the theory than has previously been attempted, it is the purpose of this study to look at the Americans of the occupation regime through the way in which they perceived the Germans. In so doing, this study shall attempt to uncover not only the American occupiers' motives and thoughts, but also the overarching dynamic that controlled their relationships and their lives, the conflict between different identity groups.

In the main struggle amongst Americans, the participants were the officers and the rank and file. Resembling a class-based conflict, the disputes between these groups usually revolved around officer privilege. Often the rank and file were critical of their superiors because they flouted the regulations regarding fraternization with German women. Occasionally the officers fought back with comments of their own regarding the heightened accountability of their rank in relation to the carefree lifestyle of the enlisted soldier. Although this was the main conflict amongst Americans in Germany, it was not the only one.

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[34] Ibid., 4.

Other conflicts existed that dealt with gender and race issues, specifically, the disputes between American men and American women in Germany. Some of these issues stemmed from fraternization practices. In particular, American women were resentful of the relative freedom that American men had in their pursuit of romantic liaisons with German women. Adding fuel to the fire were the numerous comments that American men made regarding the superiority of European women, which threatened the sanctity of American womanhood. The racial issues, albeit not discussed in great detail here, dealt with black Americans and the racism exhibited by their white counterparts.

Sometimes, the issues overlapped. For example, on one occasion, some low ranking African-American soldiers complained that their socializing with German women in a German drinking establishment was broken up by the Military Police. They bemoaned this fact, claiming that the authorities were acting in a racist fashion because similar ranking white soldiers did not encounter such treatment.[35] What this example illustrates is that race and gender-related tensions between white soldiers and the often subordinate African-Americans could intersect.

It is with an eye to such concepts and theories, and within the tradition of social history, that this study is being undertaken. As mentioned above, much of the early work on the occupation period has focused upon the opinions of elite German and American decision-makers involved in the occupation period. Later trends in the history of the occupation have focused on the *Alltagsgeschichte*, i.e., everyday life during the period. To this day, there has been no attempt at a focused or sustained analysis of the Americans

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[35] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 6 September, 1948.

who lived and worked within Germany during the official occupation.[36] This group includes not only soldiers, but also their dependents and other Americans employed by the War Department and AMG in Germany from 1945-1949. This group will be analyzed through a systematic examination of the letters-to-the-editor column 'the B Bag' in the American Armed Forces newspaper, The Stars and Stripes.

The importance of remembering these voices lies in the structure of the occupation itself. Using the idea of conflict amongst Americans as a context, AMG was at the same time encumbered and freed by a lack of firm policy, i.e., they were encumbered by being unable to follow any hard and fast rules on specific issues that may have arisen, while they were freed because the lack of guidelines meant that AMG officials often had free reign to do whatever they pleased and to create their own rules. In his study of the American-controlled community of Marburg, John Gimbel notes that the lack of clear objectives and policy allowed the representatives of AMG in the region to determine their own policy.[37] Thus, by uncovering the thoughts and opinions of the occupiers, a better understanding of the actions of this highly influential group, and of the American occupation as a whole, can be gained.

A comparable attempt at uncovering similar voices was made by Alfred Cornebise, who studied the American occupation of a portion of the German Rhineland after World War I.[38] Examining the American occupation forces' newspaper, The Amaroc News, Cornebise takes a comprehensive approach, looking at the newspaper in

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[36] Although many of the general histories of the period touch upon the thoughts and feelings of this group, it is not the main focus of these works. There is also a hole in the historical literature on American public opinion of Germans regarding this topic, as no real analyses of this group, during this time period, have been made.

[37] Gimbel, A German Community, 33.

[38] Alfred Cornebise, The Amaroc News (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1981).

its entirety. His goal is partly to tell the story of a potentially forgotten paper, but also to gain some insight into the Americans who occupied German territory at that time.[39]

Of particular interest is Cornebise's chapter entitled "Yanks, Germans and Frenchmen."[40] It is here that the author attempts to discuss the topic of American interactions with Germans. He analyzes American perceptions of Germany's leader (e.g., Kaiser Wilhelm II), its people in general, and more specifically, its women and its children. Cornebise does this by evaluating columns from throughout the paper, including the "Police Blotter," opinion columns like "Les" the Re-Hasher, re-printings of German newspaper articles, plus editorials and letters-to-the-editor. Each one of these sources adds to the understanding of the topic of German-American relations in this specific time and place, creating a sufficiently complex interpretation of the relationship.

While Cornebise does a good job plotting the interactions and relations between Germans and Americans, he does not focus specifically on American public opinion. It is in this area where his study and the present study diverge in both method and intent. By using the letters-to-the-editor columns exclusively, and by focusing on American perceptions, a sustained interpretation of the prevailing opinions of members of the occupation will be reached. By using the "B-Bag" to analyze American opinion, the ethos of democratization/Americanization, and the conflicts between the intersecting identities of the American occupiers, a greater understanding of American society within Germany will be reached.

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[39] Ibid., xxii.
[40] Ibid., Chapter 13, 173-194.

The structure of this thesis borrows from the loose organization of Cornebise's study of The Amaroc News. The first chapter focuses on the history and background of the various European editions of The Stars and Stripes generally, and the letters columns more specifically, during and after World War II. This chapter will also concentrate on the structure of the newspaper, its intended audience, and its contributors, with specific attention being paid to the apparent content and censorship decisions made by the editorial staff of the journal.

The next four chapters are also inspired by Cornebise's work. They will each focus on the opinions of Americans regarding the German people in general, the country's leaders, German men and, in particular, German women, and will end with a chapter on German children. American opinions on such topics as democratization, denazification, fraternization and charity will be discussed. Not only will debates be examined as they unfolded between readers themselves, but disagreements between readers and AMG officials will be explored as well. Such an approach will also illustrate the less than unbiased role that the editors of the column played in facilitating these debates. Overall, by uncovering the opinions of the rank and file of the occupation, a less structured and more uneven path towards the rehabilitation of the German image will be proposed, or at least it seems more tortuous than anything suggested by the linear accounts that have previously been put forward.

By the end of this account, a complex story of conflict will have been developed. Through the lens of the letters columns and their reflection of both Germanophobia and Germanophilia, evidence of conflict between different groups of the occupying force will suggest that there were a series of battles waged on a variety of issues. A story of

resistance to policy by the rank and file and regulation of the actions and thoughts of soldiers, this clash will ultimately help us understand what compelled the members of the American occupation to act in the fashion that they did.

Chapter One

Double Agent in Our Midst?

The Dual Role of The Stars and Stripes during World War II and the Occupation of Germany

At first glance, democratic freedom and deference to authority appear to be contradictory and incompatible principles. When these two ideals are mentioned within the context of World War II, they may evoke the conflict between the free and democratic populations of the western democracies and the subjugated and servile populations of the fascist dictatorships, or even between the Nazi Party and the numerous groups and individuals that opposed them within Nazi-controlled Europe. However, there were other, less obvious conflicts being waged over these notions within one of the democratic nations of the West itself.

The American Army that fought World War Two was a rigidly structured organization. It demanded much of its soldiers, especially adherence to discipline. However, many of the soldiers within the organization were civilians who enlisted and were not thoroughly indoctrinated into the Army's ways. Emerging from a background in a civil society that emphasized personal rights and freedoms, these civilian soldiers had been thrust into the reality of the American Army, whose system of beliefs stressed subordination and obedience. This volatile mixture of independent thinking combined with deference to authority led to an inevitable clash between the Army's leadership and its enlisted members.

It was within the context of this underlying conflict that the American soldier-newspaper, The Stars and Stripes was revived in 1942. A newspaper that catered to a vast audience, consisting primarily of enlisted men, The Stars and Stripes became a paradox during and immediately after World War II. On the one hand, the "Civilians under

Arms"[1] newspaper was renowned for its battles over freedom of speech with the Army's upper ranks. On the other hand, the "Unofficial Newspaper of the United States Army"[2] was just that, a newspaper that either intentionally or unintentionally served the interests of the command of the American Armed Forces. This dual and contradictory function can best be illustrated by analyzing certain aspects of the paper. By examining the paper's long history of battles with the brass during and immediately after World War II, the role of The Stars and Stripes as a protector of the interests of the common American soldier will be uncovered. An analysis focused upon the structure and purpose of the letters-to-the-editor columns will show how the paper's editors betrayed that role by frequently reinforcing the beliefs of the higher ranks. By investigating both of these functions, an understanding of the complex and seemingly contradictory nature of The Stars and Stripes will unfold.

The Stars and Stripes is a newspaper with a long and varied past.[3] The origins of the present-day versions of the paper lie with its primitive American Civil War and more complex World War I predecessors. The older editions of the paper inaugurated an "enlisted men" tradition that was consciously continued upon the rebirth of the newspaper during the Second World War. Recommencing publication on April 18, 1942, The Stars and Stripes was initially resurrected for American troops stationed in Northern

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[1] This term is taken from the title of Herbert Mitgang's book Civilians under Arms: *The Stars and Stripes*, Civil War to Korea, which provides some background and excerpts from the various versions of The Stars and Stripes that existed through The Korean War.

[2] This title is taken from the front page of various European versions of the paper published immediately after the Second World War.

[3] For more thorough histories of The Stars and Stripes, see Alfred Emile Cornebise, Ranks and Columns: Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), and Herbert Mitgang, Civilians under Arms: *The Stars and Stripes*, Civil War to Korea, (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996).

Ireland. Produced out of The Times building in London, the paper enjoyed the support of such influential people as General George Marshall, who wrote in the first issue of the Northern Ireland edition that The Stars and Stripes stood as a symbol of the freedom of speech of the western democracies, posing it against the tyranny of the Nazi regime with whom they were battling.[4]

Officially drawing its roots back to the World War I version of the paper, the first World War II issue of the periodical was branded the second edition, after the one published in Paris during the First World War.[5] Initially a weekly publication, the edition of The Stars and Stripes produced for American troops in Northern Ireland eventually became a daily newspaper on November 2, 1942 and stayed that way until it ceased publication.[6] However, unlike its First World War predecessor, this version did not remain the only edition of The Stars and Stripes during the War, as the paper continually expanded its reach and scope throughout the conflict.

As the war progressed and the American forces advanced through North Africa, Europe, and the Pacific Ocean, individual editions were developed for the benefit of the soldiers stationed in each locale. As the Americans swept across North Africa, the paper published editions in Casablanca, Oran, Algiers and Tunis. As the Allied forces invaded the European continent, The Stars and Stripes established itself across Italy, from Palermo to Milan, while other versions turned up in liberated Paris, Marseilles, Dijon and Strasbourg.[7] Following the turning of the tide in the Pacific, the paper was launched in

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[4] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 6.
[5] Mitgang, Civilians under Arms, 104.
[6] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 117-118.
[7] Zumwalt, The Stars and Stripes, 28.

Hawaii and then Shanghai, among other Far Eastern places. Finally, with the collapse of the Nazi regime, The Stars and Stripes entered Germany, publishing in the conquered Rhineland and Bavaria. In all, over 15 European editions of The Stars and Stripes were produced and many of these editions continued well after the cessation of hostilities. Unlike its antecedents during previous wars, the World War II versions of the paper established enduring legacies in the form of the Pacific and European (and surrounding area) editions, which last to this day.

Although The Stars and Stripes faced competition from numerous soldier-geared newspapers during the war, it was one, if not the, most popular daily produced for soldiers. Issues of the various editions of the paper often had large print runs. The Paris edition alone printed over 800,000 copies daily at its peak in 1944.[8] Other editions of the paper had similarly strong daily print runs, if not quite as large as their Parisian counterpart. As American troops were slowly shipped off the continent at the conclusion of the war in Europe, editions of The Stars and Stripes gradually dwindled. However, its importance as a news source for American soldiers in Europe never ceased.

Following a trend in the history of The Stars and Stripes, the editions that originated during World War II primarily focused on the issues and preoccupations affecting the enlisted men of the United States Army. The newspaper covered the news relevant to the American GI, including daily events from the front, along with political, sports and entertainment developments from the United States and the ever-present photographs of young, attractive American women. It also contained forums for the thoughts of average soldiers in the form of the artistic "Pup Tent Poets" and "Hash

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[8] Ibid., 91.

Marks" sections, as well as letters-to-the-editor in the "Mail Call" and "The B-Bag" columns.[9]

As time passed, and the war in Europe turned into the occupation of Germany, the composition of the newspaper's audience changed and so did its content. As the occupation proceeded, numerous American civilian employees and dependents came to Europe in order to live and work. These newcomers adopted The Stars and Stripes as their newspaper of choice often because it was the only daily English language source of news available to them in Europe. Reflecting the demographic change in readership, European versions began to include comic strips, lifestyle and travel information, and in some of the later versions, societal news in the form of social columns and a short-lived weekly feature section. These developments notwithstanding, The Stars and Stripes continued to remain true to its mandate, to provide the average American soldier with the news of the day.[10]

The spirit of the common soldier that was reflected within the paper's content also carried over into the unique composition of its staff. Despite the rigidly hierarchical structure of the United States Army, the staffs of the various editions of The Stars and Stripes were comprised mostly of enlisted men, along with a minority of officers. As such, it was not uncommon to see officers under the command of their subordinates in rank.[11] Even when the enlisted men did not supervise the higher-ranking officers, there still existed a level of informality and disregard for rank within many of the paper's

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[9] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 119.
[10] Mitgang, Civilians Under Arms, ix.
[11] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 118.

offices. It has been speculated that this atmosphere was fostered in order to maintain the newspaper's rank-and-file feel.[12]

Unfortunately, this informal attitude frequently came into conflict with the Army's caste-like reality. In fact, certain high-ranking officers often tried to impose their will upon the various versions of the newspaper in an attempt to convert the paper into a propaganda organ of the United States Army. Stories such as the one about General Solbert, who tried unsuccessfully to insert the slogan "Have You Killed Your German Today?" into the Paris edition, are common.[13] Sometimes, these battles with the brass were lost by the staffs of the paper, as was the case in 1946, when a long and protracted struggle with Lieutenant General John Lee over the editorial policy of the Rome edition ended when the paper ceased publishing.[14] Reflecting a natural tension between the contradictory principles of freedom of the press and army authority, such battles were waged to determine who would control the ideas expressed within the newspaper.[15]

However, suggesting that these conflicts over the paper's content were fought between its enlisted editors and the Army's higher-ranking officers, with every member of each of these groups either resisting control or inspiring it, is somewhat simplistic. Indeed, there were a number of champions of the paper within the highest positions of power of the United States Army. As mentioned earlier, General George Marshall was an

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[12] Mitgang, Civilians Under Arms, xii.
[13] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 12.
[14] Ibid., 97-98.
[15] While the conflict between the EM (Enlisted Men) publishers of The Stars and Stripes and certain disagreeable senior officers was a primary determinant in the production of the paper, the "brass" is not the only group with whom the editors came into conflict. As Alfred Cornebise notes, there were two other primary groups that engaged the staff of The Stars and Stripes in conflict, namely public relations officers within the US Army and representatives of the Information and Education Division. See Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 149. Also, other small pockets of resistance to "The B-Bag" came from the column's EM readers themselves, who resented the consistently negative tone of the majority of "The B-Bag" letters.

ardent supporter of the paper's mission, as was the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, General Dwight Eisenhower. The longest-serving American Military Governor of Germany, General Lucius Clay, also supported the publication and allowed it a high level of journalistic freedom during his tenure as chief of AMG.[16] In fact, it was the Commander-in-Chief, President Franklin Roosevelt himself, who recommended the recommencement of the World War II editions of the paper.[17] So, while The Stars and Stripes had a lot of high-ranking enemies within the United States Army, the paper also had a number of well-positioned supporters who helped to ensure its survival.

The spirit of The Stars and Stripes, that of the champion of the enlisted man, was no stronger than within the letters-to-the-editor columns entitled "Mail Call" and "The B-Bag." These sections of the paper were considered by many to be "perhaps the most widely read, and certainly the most controversial of its features."[18] It was here that servicemen and servicewomen, and later the civilian employees of the War Department and armed forces dependents, could express their thoughts, and to a lesser degree, ask for answers to specific questions from the appropriate authorities. The column had its own editors who were kept busy; the European edition of The Stars and Stripes received approximately 500 letters from troops monthly in 1948.[19] Due to space constraints (the letters were usually allotted one column on page 2), the editors replied directly to most of the correspondence that they received.[20] The column frequently had a negative tone to it

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[16] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 240.
[17] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 117-118.
[18] Ibid., 128.
[19] The Stars and Stripes, European edition, April 18, 1948.
[20] Ibid.

which it owed to its other function, that of a place to air grievances.[21] In fact, the motto of "The B-Bag" was "Blow it Out Here," which cleverly referred to a soldier's barracks bag. A piece of excess baggage, the barracks bag was a metaphor for the often highly emotional excess baggage that was aired within the confines of the column. An additional, but similar suggestion as to the meaning of the column's title came from one enlisted man who implied that it stood for the "B(itch)-Bag," in reference to its function of facilitating complaints.[22]

The nature of the grievances discussed within these columns was diverse. However, there were certain categories into which most gripes fell. The complaints often served to highlight the sub-standard material conditions that enlisted men endured, frequently comparing their negative situations to the relative comfort of officers and other supposedly privileged castes. Falling under the same type of complaint, the authors of these type of letters would often vent about how the facilities and equipment provided to them were woefully inadequate. Furthermore, the Nazis, German army and German people in general were frequently chastised both during and after the war for their brutality and their numerous character flaws. Conversely, once hostilities were terminated, many soldiers criticized the Army's non-fraternization policy and complained about how they were deprived of their freedom to consort with the citizens (read: women) of the country they occupied. In addition, the authors of these letters would also complain about being homesick, wondering about their personal demobilization or redeployment to

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[21] This function was expressed in a letter in "The B-Bag" entitled "B-Bag Called Life-Saver" by T (Technical grade)/5, 1538th Engineers, who suggested that "The B-Bag's" purpose was to provide an outlet where "gripes" could be aired. The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 3 January 1947, 2.

[22] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 4 October 1946, 2.

other, more hospitable destinations. In all, these complaints were frequently self-interested.

Some of the most common, but also the most explosive, of these complaints centered upon the Army's rigid and hierarchical ways. Perhaps partly owing to the paper's editorial policy of free speech in the face of higher-ranking resistance, many complaints criticized the arbitrary privileges given to the officer class. From lax enforcement of non-fraternization rules for officers to posh accommodations for officers, juxtaposed against the relative squalor of enlisted men's quarters, the rank and file exercised a multitude of opportunities to criticize their superiors.

Such complaints were often the source of vigorous debate within the upper ranks of the American Army. They were received poorly by higher-ranking officers who strictly adhered to traditional concepts of army discipline. Men of upper class backgrounds like Generals George Patton and Douglas MacArthur were angered by the clear insubordination that they felt these letters implied.[23] Other authorities, such as the General Board of United States Forces, European Theatre (USFET), singled out "The B-Bag's" negative outlook for the destructive influence it had upon troop morale.[24] However, men like General Dwight Eisenhower felt the columns were beneficial, because they functioned as a forum for "the rank-and-file soldier [to] blow off steam or exercise his sense of humor."[25] Showing the importance that the general placed on the column, Eisenhower claimed that every time he picked up a copy of The Stars and Stripes, "he read the letters column first of all since it gave him an idea of what the

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[23] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 112-113.
[24] Ibid., 156.
[25] Ibid., 149-150.

soldier was thinking about."[26] So while complaints about rank may have been a sore point in some quarters, they were welcomed by others.

These letters columns became so controversial amongst the Army's leadership that certain steps were taken by the officer corps to mould the column into a regulatory tool. The Rome-based, Mediterranean edition of The Stars and Stripes was the target of a specific attempt to change "The B-Bag's" editorial policy. In particular, certain Army commanders implemented a plan where letters dealing with a controversial subject would be published only if an official response by the appropriate authorities concerned was given.[27] Recognized by the editors and contributors to the column as "The Old Game,"[28] the producers of the paper fought such restrictions. Trying to dissuade similar manipulations, the editors of the Liege, Belgium edition printed an account of the Mediterranean edition's battle and added that the powers-that-be were attempting to turn "The B-Bag" into "a device for 'official instruction and orientation.' "[29] In the end, the official policy was abandoned, although as we shall see, the practice may have, in fact, been adopted by some of "The B-Bag's" editors.

Shifting focus away from the history of The Stars and Stripes in general and the letters-to-the-editor columns in particular, analysis of the purpose and structure of "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" columns will uncover some unintended results these columns produced. As mentioned above, these columns were published with the primary goal of allowing common soldiers the chance to air their grievances. While the express purpose

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[26] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 5 and The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, 21 September, 1945.
[27] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 149.
[28] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, 14 September, 1945.
[29] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 39.

of the columns made them controversial and they were reviled by certain members of the Army brass, they also had a much more positive effect. As both Alfred Cornebise and Herbert Mitgang have noted, the complaints aired in the columns were often noticed and heeded by certain authorities within the Army. Generally, Mitgang has claimed that, "sometimes commanders listened, learned and restrained."[30] More specifically, Cornebise credits "The B-Bag" And "Mail Call" columns with providing a forum for legitimate complaints regarding the Army's rigidly hierarchical system and the practice of "chickenshit," both of which were subsequently looked into by Army investigators.[31]

This positive effect of the column may have possibly been offset by the detrimental impact that the letters-to-the-editor feature had on group morale. As mentioned earlier, the General Board of USFET published a report detailing the negative effects that "The B-Bag" column in particular had on group morale in Europe. Unfortunately this topic falls outside of the scope of this study. However, a surface examination of the issue reveals three possible outcomes: first, a lowering of morale due to the consistent preoccupation with negative conditions in Europe; second, a strengthening of group identity and cohesion, because these letters fostered the notion of a common experience and thus a bond between soldiers; or third, a combination of the two previous possibilities. In the end, more research on the topic needs to be done before any firm conclusions can be reached.

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[30] Mitgang, Civilians Under Arms, xix.

[31] Cornebise, Ranks and Columns, 153. "Chickenshit" is a derogatory term used by soldiers to refer to the practice of officers requiring the soldiers to carry out meaningless activities for which no logical explanation could be found from the soldiers' perspective (e.g. excessive cleaning of barracks).

Another unintended result, and one that is particularly important for this study, is found within the main purpose of the columns. As mentioned above, "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" sections functioned supposedly as an outlet for complaints vented by common soldiers. This purpose had the consequence of producing a body of work that was predominantly negative in tone. While not particularly important in and of itself, this negative tone can pose problems for the researcher who wishes to uncover the true feelings of Americans in Europe, and Germany in particular, who read the paper during and after World War II. When cumulatively considering the letters submitted to the column, a researcher cannot help but come to the conclusion that the common American experience in Germany, and their interactions with Germans, during and after World War II was overwhelmingly negative. Consequently these sources may be flawed.

When compared with historical accounts of the occupation of Germany and some of the other letters that are critical of the soldiers' gripes, the reliability of the mail columns begins to come into perspective. In general accounts of the occupation, Germany is often painted as a land of chaos and instability, especially immediately after the War. However, whenever writing about the American experience in Germany, historians and first-hand witnesses have frequently commented about the relative privilege of the conquering American forces within their zone of occupation. For example, in his account of the early years of the occupation, author Julian Bach suggests that American soldiers "never lived so well," and that "Allied forces are in Germany as conquerors. [Consequently] conquering has its privileges."[32] These sentiments are echoed in seldom published letters within "The B-Bag" itself, where contributors employ the term "never

[32] Bach, America's Germany, 31.

had it so good" when replying to those who complain about the conditions in Germany. The function of this term was to imply that many Americans were living in Germany with certain privileges which they were not accustomed to and which they would never have had in the United States. Among these special privileges were household servants, living in large homes, and being able to obtain expensive luxury items on the black market for the cost of a few cigarettes.[33] As such, the American experience in Germany can also be seen as a positive improvement in the material conditions of many occupation troops. In reality, an overall assessment of the actual occupation experience for Americans may be found somewhere between the positive and negative poles. With that in mind, the letters published within these letters-to-the-editors columns should be examined with caution.

The structure of the column is a different issue from that of its purpose. Although the production staff of The Stars and Stripes often thought of, and portrayed themselves as representatives of the enlisted man, they frequently betrayed these common soldiers' interests in "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call." Just because the editors of these columns were often enlisted men themselves does not mean that they worked to feverishly protect the interests of the rank and file. Often their efforts would produce a contradictory effect, helping to re-establish the status quo through a reinforcing and regulating process, rather than representing the anti-establishment interests of the common soldier.

The editors managed to accomplish the reinforcement and regulation of soldiers' thoughts in a number of ways. In particular, they would often contradict, refute, or

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[33] While not necessarily the universal experience of all of the occupation personnel, many people enjoyed these perks.

support the comments of the average soldier through the use of an "Editor's Note" as an accompaniment to the GI's unabbreviated or excerpted letter. Either written by the editor or by an official authority on an issue,[34] the "Editor's Note" often prescribed suggestions for a course of action regarding issues addressed in the letters, corrected the letter writer's assertions, introduced facts about a situation that may have been omitted by the author, or most importantly, articulated official US Army policy on an issue raised in the letter. By criticizing or correcting the ideas of the letter writer, the "Editor's Note" served to undermine the credibility and veracity of the complaints raised, often neutralizing the letter's impact on others. By prescribing solutions or articulating official policy, the editors' contributions had the potential to affect both the readers and the authors of these letters by influencing their future thoughts and actions. Thus the process was both complex and thorough.

The negative side of this regulatory process can be illustrated in with the following example. The shortage of material goods was a topic of regular discussion within the two letters columns. Reflecting a conqueror's mentality, where to the victors go the spoils, numerous letters were written by Americans who complained that Germans had access to goods that were either absent from American stockpiles or were in short supply. An example of an average letter of this type was printed in "The B-Bag" column in late November 1948. In it the author complained of seeing American "For Armed Forces Only" supplies in a German store, asking from where these goods were

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[34] Usually the response of either the letter writer's commanding officer or the European Theater's chief authority on a subject was printed.

obtained.[35] In response to the question, an "Editor's Note" was printed directly after the letter, claiming that the sale of these items was legitimate and that they were surplus goods introduced into the German market.[36] By completely negating the complaint, the editor managed to neutralize the effect of this particular query. Furthermore, the editor was also able to cast a certain measure of doubt upon any further issues of the sort by providing a perfectly simple explanation for the appearance of the items. In short, the editor potentially regulated the thoughts not only of the letter writer, but also of the readers of the column.

The "Editor's Note" also performed a positive function through the process of reinforcement. A typical example of the reinforcement phenomenon is as follows. The author of one letter raised the contentious issue of German civilians and displaced persons frequenting officer and civilian clubs that were off-limits to enlisted men. In this letter, the civilian author proclaimed these incidents "an insult to the GIs."[37] Supporting this idea, the "Editor's Note" acknowledged the unfair nature of the situation, but was resigned to the fact that each club retained the right to establish its own entry policies.[38] Thus, by agreeing with the author, the editor managed to support his contention and give it added validity.

The editors of the column also attempted to regulate or reinforce soldiers' opinions by inserting a comic panel beneath or in the middle of the letters that would either undermine or support the authors' point of view. To illustrate the regulating aspect

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[35] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 24 November 1948, 2.
[36] Ibid.
[37] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 July 1948, 2.
[38] Ibid.

of this process note the following example. The Stars and Stripes published a report early in May 1945 regarding the accidental death of German POWs while being transported in an airless American railcar earlier that month. In response to this article, a letter was published within the "Mail Call" column criticizing the American negligence that caused the deaths, comparing this incident unfavourably to intentional German atrocities against Allied soldiers during the war. Perhaps in response to this criticism, a comic panel was published in the middle of the letter portraying a hulking German POW intimidating a scrawny American mess-hall attendant. The caption has the German POW reproach his server, demanding to know where the spoon for his caviar and ice cream is. Clearly the intention of placing the cartoon panel in the middle of the letter was to dismiss complaints about the mistreatment and neglect of German POWs. This was accomplished by showing the "enemy," the German soldier, enjoying the luxuries of being a prisoner of war. By doing so, the editors played into the prevalent idea on POW treatment at the time, suggesting that these soldiers had it far too good and needed to be punished more severely, thereby neutralizing if not totally negating the original complaint.

Conversely, the reinforcement process through the use of comic panels operated as follows. Another widely debated topic during the period of the occupation was the re-education of German youth. Specifically, the American authorities recognized that the far-reaching scope of the Nazi education system resulted in the indoctrination of millions of German children with National Socialist ideology. US authorities attempted to solve this problem by instituting a wide-ranging re-education process. A number of different ideas on the matter surfaced from all segments of the American population in Germany.

A rather original take on the subject was printed within "The B-Bag" column on August 16, 1945.[39] Drawing on common notions relating to the excessive deference that Germans paid to authority, and the individuality and skepticism of authority associated with American political culture, the author of the letter advocates teaching disobedience in German schools in order to spread democratic values. The editors of the column reinforced this opinion by including a comic panel that agreed with the text of the letter. In the panel, German children are depicted adorned in traditional garb and defiantly thumbing their noses at the Swastika. The combination of the text and visuals reinforcing one another helped to further the author's point.

To a lesser extent, the editors of "The B-Bag would often bias the reader towards or against the letters they published by appointing them favourable or unfavourable titles. If the title of a letter was catchy and in general agreement with the letter writer, then the reader might be more inclined to support the views of the author. For example, in a letter regarding the impropriety of German maids eating rations meant for Americans, an editor of the column saw fit to title the letter "The 'Maids' Have it Made."[40] Influenced by the conqueror's mentality so prevalent at the time, this letter was written in protest against Germans receiving American rations, asking "who won the War, we or the Germans?"[41] By providing a title that was both catchy and in agreement with the letter's content, the editor of the column reinforced the initial message of the author. Taking it one step further, the editor also included a cartoon panel of a German woman eating at a mess hall,

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[39] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 15 August 1945, 2.
[40] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 12 September 1945, 2.
[41] Ibid.

thereby proving that these practices were sometimes used in conjunction with one another in order to further substantiate or refute the author's point.

In the case of each of the previous processes, the regulating devices were placed at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the letter, often allowing the editors to have the first and last word on the subjects covered.[42] By either promoting a position or by discrediting it, this process enabled the editors to bias readers' reactions to numerous letters. By imbuing letters with their own particular slant on an issue via a positive or negative title, last word, and/or pictures, the editors of "The B-Bag" wielded a great deal of power. Such devices gave the editors more control over the ideas within these columns than any historian of The Stars and Stripes has previously admitted.

While the editors of these columns exerted a great deal of control over the context in which the letters were read, some soldiers read them with a very critical eye. Recognizing the regulatory potential of the "Editor's Note" feature, some authors would criticize the function of the notes or ridicule the column altogether. In a letter questioning the delay in jeep sales to soldiers, one GI stated that he knew "the Stars and Stripes will publish some official excuse if this letter is answered."[43] Another soldier, critical of the column in general, claimed that writers were often discredited by the editors through the use of controlling practices. This author singled out the "Editor's Note" in particular as being "so humorous in their arrant (sic), innnoxious (sic) way."[44] Fuelled by the enlisted man's distrust of authority in general, some of the contributors to "The B-Bag" were as

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[42] These processes were particularly prevalent in, although not exclusively confined to, the editions of The Stars and Stripes published in Germany after the end of the War.
[43] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 10 May 1947, 2.
[44] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 4 September 1947, p. 2.

suspicious of their "compatriots" at The Stars and Stripes as they were of their superiors within the Army.

Although the steps taken to organize and control the flow of ideas within "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" columns biased and shaped the discussions they included, they must not be viewed as formal censorship. Although the battles between the brass and the enlisted men who ran the publication involved the introduction of a measure of censorship, this process was informal. The official job of censoring was performed through the offices of the Army and Navy censors, as noted in the section of the newspaper detailing the paper's cost and place of publication. Two former editors discuss The Stars and Stripes policy on censorship in their accounts of the paper's history. As Ken Zumwalt has noted, during the war all articles in the daily dealing with troop movements at the front were usually censored for 48 hours.[45] The rationale behind this policy was to deprive the enemy of sensitive details that could have jeopardized the war effort. Given the fact that the letters to the paper were mailed through the Army's postal system and dealt with either specific personal issues or general concepts, most of these discussions fell outside of the scope of the censors. Herbert Mitgang has given a similar account of this censorship process. However, he also described the conflict between the censors and editors of the paper when the censors "held up (a story) for ambiguous nonmilitary reasons."[46] While these reasons may have affected "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" columns on occasion, there are no accounts of this having taken place. For issues published in Germany during the occupation, Army and Navy censors were no longer

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[45] Zumwalt, Stars and Stripes, 24.
[46] Mitgang, Civilians Under Arms, xiv.

subjecting The Stars and Stripes to censorship after September 8, 1945. However, while there may not have been any formal censorship of letters, other factors continued in helping to determine what was included within the column.

Recalling the primary purpose of "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" columns, their grievance-airing goal may have provided a function similar to that of censorship. In other words, by existing primarily as a sounding board for the problems of Americans in Europe, these columns often failed to focus on instances where Americans were acting to the detriment of other groups. Specifically, the excesses of Americans in occupied Germany, usually committed at the expense of the German populace, often went without discussion and unexplored presumably because these excesses did not hurt Americans directly. For example, Americans were up in arms within the pages of "The B-Bag" and "Mail Call" over the rampant sexual relations between German women and American men and the resultant epidemic of venereal disease. However, they were almost completely silent on the matter when it came to the other by-product of these encounters, the 30,000 to 93,000 children born out of wedlock to German women. Between September 1945 and September 1949, only 2 letters on this topic were published in the letters-to-the-editor column of the German editions of The Stars and Stripes. The first of these letters was of a personal and thus self-interested nature as it dealt with a GI wishing to bring his German-born wife and child home to the US.[47] The other letter suggested curbing the pregnancy and venereal disease problems at once by forcing American soldiers to marry the German women they impregnated.[48] Neither letter dealt vigorously

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[47] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 March 1946, 2.
[48] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 11 May 1946, 2.

with the negative consequences that German women, and German society as a whole, had to face as a result of the resulting baby boom.

Other aspects of American impropriety, such as sexual violence against German women and various criminal behaviours, were almost completely omitted from discussion whereas similar, lesser German infractions were discussed regularly. Ultimately the overriding motivation in both of these types of omissions appears to have been the pursuit of American self-interest.

In spite of the limits imposed upon the flow of ideas, it should be noted that the letters-to-the-editor columns within The Stars and Stripes did an admirable job of including numerous letters that dealt with a variety of controversial subjects. From letters criticizing American fraternization policy to those dealing with the rigid hierarchy of the American Army to those exploring the limits of American tolerance of the former enemy, there was never a shortage of controversial issues discussed within the columns. Although certainly regulated and controlled, the columns were able to present American commanders like Eisenhower with a good idea of what his soldiers were thinking about.

From its humble beginnings, The Stars and Stripes catered to the rank and file of the United States Army. Due to a staff composed primarily of enlisted men, and a mandate to meet the various needs of the common soldier, The Stars and Stripes almost always championed this constituency. In most cases during World War II, and into the immediate post-war period, the editorial staff of the paper refused to succumb to the pressure from above to censor any of its content. Upholding the principles of freedom of speech and of the press, the editorial staff waged and won numerous battles with the authorities for control over the material their readership would consume.

However, upon further examination, the editors' record is revealed to have been less than stellar. In particular, the editors of the letters columns often betrayed their readers for the sake of emphasizing official dogma or their own beliefs. Instead of censorship taking place through the official Army channels, the editors of these columns used different techniques meant to bias the reader for or against an argument. Through the use of "Editor's Notes," cartoon panels, and cleverly phrased titles, the editors often engaged in an intricate process of reinforcement and regulation of the debates that were conducted within their columns. In short, the editors betrayed the very principle they claimed to uphold, that of freedom of speech and freedom of thought.

Having outlined some of the factors that helped to shape and limit these columns as research material, it is obvious that our analysis of the opinions of occupying Americans in Germany must be constrained by certain limitations. Such parameters, however, do not negate the value of the project. Expanding upon the themes of both this chapter and this thesis as a whole, American public opinion will be used as a mirror to reflect the conflicts that lie underneath the surface of the debates found within the pages of The Stars and Stripes.

Chapter Two

Revenge, Reconciliation and Dominance:
Trends in American Opinions of Germans During the Occupation, 1944-1949

There is "*no good German but a dead German*"[1]

- a common comment made by American soldiers at the close of World War II

We must treat Germans accordingly "*if we want the American Way to mean anything*"[2]

- an interpretation of how Americans should properly behave during the occupation of Germany, made by an American civilian in the summer of 1946

In many ways, the two heading quotes illustrate how the occupiers felt during the military occupation of Germany. At the close of the war and for a long time after, the majority of Americans in Germany were guided by a sense that the entire German populace was collectively guilty for the horrors of the Nazi regime. After all, how could people not have known what was going on within their borders? Convinced by this interpretation, many Americans advocated a stern punishment and Carthaginian peace for Germany. However, once those same Americans had a chance to acquaint themselves with the situation in Germany that they inherited, and they became familiar with the people whom they had conquered, American attitudes toward the German problem began to shift. Buoyed by a strong desire to establish peace, by a certain amount of self-interest and, most importantly, by the strength of their own convictions, Americans within Germany went about the task of democratizing and reorienting the German people.

Building on one of the assumptions of this study, i.e., that public opinion is not an ahistorical phenomenon, the initial part of this chapter is devoted to the examination of the development of American images of Germans and the German nation. Covering the

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[1] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 27 November 1944.
[2] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 5 September, 1946.

period from American independence to the end of the Second World War, this analysis will attempt to see what pre-existing beliefs contributed to the occupiers' conceptions of Germans between 1944 and 1949. Once a brief analysis of the history of American opinions of the German people is completed, the task of assessing the opinions of Americans in Germany will commence. Accounts of several recurrent issues that dominated the pages of The Stars and Stripes' "B-Bag" column will show a hasty warming of American attitudes, but also the stubborn persistence of intolerance. Eventually the reorientation and democratization of Germany will be examined. Analysis of this project will serve to highlight how many Americans perceived their mission in Germany, which was seen as a struggle to improve Germany through American knowledge, know-how, and if need be, labour, and how it conflicted with the concept of democratization.

Historically, American opinion of Germans has been influenced by the means through which Americans received information about Germans. In the early days of the republic, many of the opinions Americans developed were guided by observations dependent on the personal interactions with Germans. Travel journals of early nineteenth century Americans who visited the Old World are some of the first pieces of evidence of American thinking about Germans. The interactions that Americans experienced show how well-to-do Americans viewed the German people as backward and inefficient in their labour processes, blaming these shortcomings on how Germans used their time and how they conceived of gender roles.[3] Other images of the German people also came from

[3] Hermann Wellenreuther, " "Germans Make Cows and Women Work:" American Perceptions of Germans as Reported in American Travel Books, 1800-1840," Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and

the daily interactions that Americans had with Germans immigrants in the United States. By the early to mid-nineteenth century, the United States boasted a large population of ethnically German residents. Resulting from the interactions they had with these early waves of immigrants, many Americans developed a sense that Germans were educated, hard working, industrious, independent and wise with their money.[4] Each of these sets of beliefs were either reinforced or negated by further observations that Americans made later on.

Another type of data that Americans acquired about Germans came from American newspapers, and their accounts of events within what was to become the German-nation state. The revolution of 1848 was met with early American optimism, followed by a sense of bitterness when it failed. Such events created a sense that Germans were great thinkers, yet were paralyzed into inaction by their ideas when the fate of democracy was at stake.[5] Soon thereafter, educated Americans shifted their attention to the Prussian-led attempt to unify Germany. In the minds of many, the issue of national unity was linked to liberty, a concept supported by many northern Americans.[6] However, with the culmination of the German unification movement during the Franco-Prussian War, the American media and others realized that the cause of unity under the Prussian banner was led by an illiberal and undemocratic regime.[7] As a result, the feelings of

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America Since 1776, edited by David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 54-58.

[4] Manfred Jonas, The United States and Germany: A Diplomatic History (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 20, and Hans W. Gatzke, Germany and the United States: A "Special Relationship?" (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 31-32.

[5] John Gerow Gazley, American Opinion of German Unification 1848-1871 (New York: Longmann, Greens and Co., 1926), 33 and Gatzke, Germany and the United States, 29-30.

[6] Jonas, The United States and Germany, 29-30.

[7] Gazley, American Opinion of German Unification, 376.

support for German unity were tempered with concerns about the type of state that would be created upon its culmination. Once unity was achieved, these fears were borne out, as the German Empire largely became an extension of its Prussian forebear. This reality helped to shape American opinions of the regime that began to emphasize its un-democratic authoritarian and militaristic tendencies.[8]

As the Imperial period in German history proceeded, tensions between Americans and Germans grew. During this time both nations were relatively new powers on the world scene and were vying for position amongst other big powers. American opinions began to be tainted by pursuit of self-interest. Stemming from this competition, Americans increasingly saw Imperial Germany as a threat to their status on the international stage. Instead of directly dealing with these issues, Americans displaced some of their misgivings by maligning German education and culture. Although the German educational system was the model for the infant American system during the latter half of the nineteenth century,[9] it was also seen as a reflection of the autocratic nature of German politics and society.[10] As German interests began to threaten American ones both globally and in the Western Hemisphere[11], German culture was also singled out. Paralleling threats to US interests abroad, many Americans on the east coast believed

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[8] Konrad H. Jaurasch, "Huns, Krauts or Good Germans? The German Image in America, 1800-1980," German American Interrelations: Heritage and Challenge, edited by James F. Harris (Tubingen, Germany: Tubingen University Press, 1985), 149.

[9] Gatzke, Germany and the United States, 39.

[10] Jorg Nagler, "Changing American Perceptions of Imperial Germany, 1870-1914," Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776 (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1997), 143-144.

[11] For a brief discussion of German activities on the world stage during the early part of the twentieth century see Reignhild Fiebig-von Hase, "The United States and Germany in the World Arena, 1900-1917," Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924. edited by Hans-Jurgen Schroeder (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 33-68. For a similarly brief discussion of German actions in the Western Hemisphere, see Melvin Small, "The United States and the German "Threat" to the Hemisphere, 1905-1914," Americas, 1978 (3): 252-270.

German culture had become a real threat to American interests at home. This fear was largely facilitated by the belief that German culture had influenced American society because of the prevalence of German ideas in the American high school and university systems.[12] Egalitarian Americans recoiled at the conspicuous elitism apparent in German culture.[13] Eventually, the culture became linked to other negative German images such as the Kaiser and militarism.[14] The growing negativity that characterized American opinions of Germans would provide the foundation for much more harsh appraisals as the twentieth century progressed.

The next major event that affected American opinions of Germans came in the form of the Great War. Early German misdeeds during World War I, such as the supposed "Rape of Belgium," the sinking of the Lusitania, and the waging of unrestricted submarine warfare, helped to create negative attitudes towards Germans. Upon news of such events, the American media employed terms such as "barbarism and inhumanity" [15] to describe German actions and shape American opinion. Public attitudes were further fuelled by well-publicized German sabotage efforts in the United States, by British success in exposing German schemes in Mexico and by simplistic American government propaganda designed to spur US entry into the war and then to bolster the war effort. By

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[12] Frank Trommler, "Inventing the Enemy; German-American Cultural Relations, 1900-1917," Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924, edited by Hans-Jurgen Schroeder (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 107 and 114.
[13] Elliott Shore, "The Kultur Club," Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924, edited by Hans-Jurgen Schroeder (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 131.
[14] Trommler, "Inventing the Enemy," 118.
[15] Jonas, The United States and Germany, 105.

1917, the American public had become bitterly hateful towards all things German.[16] Placed into perspective, World War One propaganda helped produce a unitary public sentiment:

> America viewed the war as a fight between darkness and light, as a battle between good and evil, in which America aimed "to make the world safe for democracy" against the autocratic powers of militarism and monarchy.[17]

The manipulations of a naïve American public had grave consequences. An attempt to destroy the twin threats of German culture and language was made with moderately successful results. Fears of a German fifth column[18] helped contribute to anti-German riots in some major American cities during 1917. By the end of the war, positive views of Germany within the United States had reached a nadir.

Although the Weimar period in German history provided a respite from anti-German sentiment in the United States, it proved brief. Despite small pockets of support, the vast majority of the American public reviled the Nazi regime that succeeded Weimar. This hatred increased as the 1930s progressed and as the Nazi state stepped up its efforts against ethnic, religious and political "enemies." Repressive measures within Germany created such a backlash in the United States that by December 1938, well over 90% of the American public disapproved of Nazi treatment of Jews and Catholics, and a further 78% of them favoured economic sanctions against Germany to protest these human rights

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[16] Paul Finkelman, "The War on German Language and Culture, 1917-1919," Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924, edited by Hans-Jurgen Schroeder (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 180.
[17] Erich Angermann, "1917 Reconsidered,", Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924, edited by Hans-Jurgen Schroeder (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 427.
[18] Gatzke, Germany and the United States, 59.

abuses.[19] In August 1937, only 30% of Americans believed that Germany would instigate the next world war,[20] but that number jumped to 62% by January 1939, after the Anschluss with Austria and the Czechoslovak Crisis.[21] Although the United States remained officially neutral, by the time World War II began in September 1939 American sentiment was clearly aligned against Germany.

American opinions about the German people during the Second World War were markedly different from those expressed during World War I in a number of ways. Having learned a negative lesson from the previous conflict, the American public no longer targeted all things German.[22] In particular, Americans now hesitated to channel their anger towards Germany into persecution of ethnic German minorities within their borders. Turning away from the tactics of 1917/1918 and the anti-German legacy of the First World War, the American public largely disapproved of the eradication of German culture and language from the United States.[23] Opinion polls consistently showed that Americans channelled their rage at Nazi leaders and not necessarily at their German subjects.[24] Initially, Americans would only suggest that the German populace as a whole

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[19] N. A., "American Institute of Public Opinion – Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1939 (3), 598.
[20] George Gallup and Claude Robinson, "American Institute of Public Opinion – Surveys, 1935-1938," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1938 (2), 388.
[21] N. A., "American Institute of Public Opinion – Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1939 (3), 598.
[22] Finkelman, "The War on German Language," 194-195.
[23] A small amount of respondents, 12% and 9% respectively, believed that the German language and German music should stop being taught in American schools. N.A., "Gallup and Fortune Polls, Public Opinion Quarterly, 1940 (4) 96.
[24] Four opinion polls conducted during 1942 suggested that about three-quarters of Americans believed that the United States was at war with the German government and not the German people. These results diminished to just under two-thirds by August 1944, but still remained strong. N. A., "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1943 (7), 173 and N. A., "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1944 (8), 448.

was "too easily led," rather than being warlike or responsible for the war in general.[25] After the attempt on Hitler's life by high-ranking German officials in 1944, almost two-thirds of Americans were convinced that most Germans viewed the Nazi regime as odious.[26] However, these views were transformed by the gruesome revelations of far-reaching Nazi atrocities against European Jews and other civilians.

American opinions of Germans were also adversely affected by the ongoing brutality of the war, which also now involved Nazi war crimes against American soldiers. Polls conducted throughout the latter stages of the war in late 1944 and early 1945 reflected a definite reversal of opinion. By late 1944, Nazi massacres against European Jewry had become common knowledge, as evidenced by opinion poll results,[27] and Americans began to feel that all Germans were implicated in Nazi crimes. An opinion poll in early 1945 suggested that over four-fifths of Americans thought that the German people either fully or partly supported the mistreatment and murder of prisoners in Nazi concentration camps. [28] No longer were Americans willing to excuse the German populace for widespread crimes against the peoples of Europe.

The results of this temporary shift in opinion were most felt in the debate on occupation policy. Originally, the discussion on the issue was guided by a sense that Americans should be strict but not unfairly vengeful. In two early polls, conducted in late 1943 and early 1944, nearly half of those surveyed believed that Germany should be

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[25] Poll results in August 1943 show that the number of Americans who believed Germans deferred too easily to authority outnumbered the number of Americans who thought Germans were warrior-like by more than double. N. A., "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1943 (7), 489.
[26] N. A., "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1944 (8), 296.
[27] Ibid., 588.
[28] N. A., "The Quarter's Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1945 (9), 246.

handled sternly.[29] However, by the end of 1944, the option "destroy completely" became the most widely supported choice, overtaking "strict supervision" by two percent.[30] Influenced by the public debate surrounding the U. S. Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau's plan for the de-industrialization and "pastoralization" of Germany, Americans desired revenge and a policy designed to bring a final end to the lengthy and brutal conflicts supposedly instigated by Germany. By the time that Americans had begun administering parts of Germany, the high loss of life and horrible crimes committed by the Nazi regime had convinced nearly all Americans that the German menace would have to be extinguished by any means necessary.

Similar attitudes were prevalent amongst the first combat troops who entered Germany in the fall of 1944. The trend towards implicating all Germans for the crimes of their leaders was certainly strong. In what can best be described as a debate about innate German evilness, a majority of soldiers who wrote to The Stars and Stripes commented that all Germans were born bad. Based upon a belief in the collective guilt of the German populace, this school of thought was characterized by vengeful and hate-filled emotional tirades that were based on the fear of another German instigated war and disgust for German misdeeds in Europe. Frequently, letter-writers employed terms like "All 'Good' Heinies Dead," or the search for a good German "would take a million years."[31] These attitudes extended into suggestions that Americans should "(m)ake it as tough on them [Germans] as they made it on the rest of Europe while it was under their control."[32]

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[29] George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll, Volume 1 (New York, Random House, 1972), 419 and 426.
[30] George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll, Volume 1 (New York, Random House, 1972), 470.
[31] Ibid., 1 January 1945, 2.
[32] Ibid., 9 December 1944, 2.

Hitting closer to home, this group also appealed to the memories of "our boys" and "my best pal" who had been slain at the hands of the "rotten barbarians" (Germans).[33] Each of these emotional pleas helped justify a Carthaginian peace in which Germans would pay dearly for their crimes. A harsh peace, based on a negative punishment model, was seen by such people as the answer to the German dilemma.

On the other side sat a persistent and vocal minority who were also driven by a desire for peace on the continent. However, they utilized logic to advocate a fundamentally different conception of American occupation policy. Claiming that 'peace plans' which included draconian measures against the Germans were untenable, this group rejected the notion of collective guilt. Instead, they sought a pragmatic policy that realized the need to re-educate and rehabilitate Germans in a peaceful and democratic manner. Achieving this goal meant working with some of the "good" Germans who did not take part in Nazi atrocities.[34] Some adherents to this line of thought also took the time to expose the critical flaws in the other side's argument. They maintained that "if we sow hatred and enmity we shall reap the same,"[35] thereby exposing one of the main arguments of the collective guilt camp.[36] They also suggested that blanket generalizations such as "all Germans are bad [are] as stupid as saying all Americans are good,"[37] or that such generalizations "are false and they only lead to emotionalism and conclusions which are

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[33] Ibid., 29 January, 1945, 2.
[34] Ibid., 27 November, 1944, 2.
[35] Ibid., 29 January, 1945, 2.
[36] The use of the term unmasking may be a little misleading as some of the members of the "no good Germans" camp state their unabashed hatred for Germans and lobby for others to become hateful too. See Ibid., 9 February, 1945, 2.
[37] Ibid., 21 April, 1945, 2.

unfounded."[38] Thereby, letter-writers of a more liberal temperament attempted to undermine the credibility of their rivals and to further emphasize the irrational motivations of "hard peace" advocates. Evidence was provided to prove the point in one letter, as the writer reminded readers that some of those who opposed Nazism and perished in concentration camps were German themselves.[39] Perhaps recognizing the flaws in anecdotal evidence, proponents of a more pragmatic policy utilized common sense as their most effective tool.

The logical strengths of the anti-collective guilt camp notwithstanding, the persuasiveness of emotional arguments persisted. This "bad Germans" train of thought continually found a receptive audience in the average American at home and in Germany because Nazi acts and aggression caused universal outrage. In short, although rational arguments may have had more moral and logical weight to them, they never fully won out exactly because the issue they were addressing was not and could never be rationally considered.

This heated debate boiled over during April 1945 in "The B-Bag" column of The Stars and Stripes. What precipitated this particular flurry of letters were the comments made by prominent American journalist Dorothy Thompson, which favoured the use of German exiles to help run occupied Germany. The proponents of the collective guilt side took the opportunity to use all the same emotional arguments they had earlier deployed, including those about Nazi atrocities and the appeal to their fallen comrades to justify vengeance. They also used new approaches, such as citing Goebbels' total war effort as

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[38] Ibid., 14 December, 1944, 2.
[39] Ibid.

evidence of the guilt of all Germans for the Nazi crimes perpetrated in their name.[40] Perhaps an even more persuasive argument hinged upon the difficulty of discerning Nazis from non-Nazis. Foreshadowing a general problem of the German occupation, one author used the example of the Allied occupation of Italy, arguing that the ridding of the country of Fascists was problematic due to the uncooperative Italian citizens and the lack of training that military personnel had in identifying Fascists.[41] This time, advocates of the doctrine of collective guilt highlighted some serious potential problems with the occupation.

Not all attempts to discredit Thompson were nearly as shrewd or dignified. Many men took the opportunity to insult Thompson's intelligence and argued that she was no judge of character. Preying upon a pre-existing fear of a German fifth column within the United States, one author wrote that Thompson was brainwashed by her contact with German émigrés, who were really the forward units of the Nazi propaganda effort in the country.[42] One letter-writer even suggested that the arguments made by Thompson and her supporters were actually representative of Nazi propaganda. This type of argument suggested that Nazi propaganda minister Goebbels had helped design such ideas in order to trick the Allies into instituting a kinder peace and setting up favourable preconditions for a Nazi resurgence.[43] By making such claims, this author implied that Thompson and her supporters were in fact unwitting Nazi agents.

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[40] Ibid., 13 April, 1945, 2.
[41] Ibid., 3 April, 1945, 2.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., 16 April, 1945, 2.

The supporters of Thompson had equally persuasive arguments against the pro-collective guilt side, although these points were generally built upon a framework of reason and pragmatism. To counter the collective guilt argument, one contributor pointed out the fact that support for Hitler and his Nazi Party never exceeded little more than one-third in democratic elections for the Reichstag.[44] To counter the more underhanded points made by the opponents of Thompson's ideas, her supporters were not above fighting fire with fire. They also used the strategy of associating their adversaries with the taint of Nazism. In particular, they suggested that collective guilt arguments were not-so-cleverly-disguised hate campaigns, tactics that were used by the Nazis.[45] They also erroneously suggested that those who advocated the destruction of Germany were the same isolationists[46] who had allowed the horrors of Nazism to unfold without an early American response.

Ultimately it was Thompson who was left to best re-articulate her case. She argued for the existence and necessity of "good" Germans based upon the integral role they would play in helping Americans achieve what she perceived to be their goals; those of avoiding a long and burdensome occupation and rebuilding of Germany along democratic lines.[47] She also provided the Soviet and British use of German anti-Nazis as proof of the success that such a policy would have.[48] Furthermore, she defended her statements advocating the use of German émigrés by suggesting they would be even better representatives in helping to govern Germany because they were both loyal to the

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[44] Ibid., 10 April, 1945, 2.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 11 April, 1945, 2.
[47] Ibid., 24 April, 1945, 2.
[48] Ibid.

United States and had exceptional standards of personal integrity.[49] Once again, pragmatism was shown to be one of the cornerstones of the anti-collective guilt camp.

As the war came to an end and American Military Government became a fact of everyday life across the American zone of occupation, an uneven shift in opinion among U. S. occupation troops began. This shift entailed a move away from the bitterness and vengeance of the war and toward a more complex, if not entirely tolerant view of Germans. Whereas initial letters published in "The B-Bag" during the war used such derogatory terms as "dirty bastards," "Huns,"[50] and "the crummiest, stinkingest bunch of so-and-so's that ever walked,"[51] later letters spoke of individual Germans (particularly women) who were not terrible monsters. As the months of the occupation passed into years, letter-writers no longer exclusively used logic/common sense -- i.e., arguments like "generalizations about any particular group of people are false" -- to show that good Germans existed. Observations from personal interactions once again resurfaced as a credible alternative to the "no decent Germans" argument. The controversial comments of one particular contributor to "The B-Bag" spoke of the German mechanics under his command with such high regard as to claim they were better than "anything Uncle Sam could get in uniform."[52] Innumerable letters from GIs about the decency of their German girlfriends also abounded. The fact that American soldiers could offer concrete examples of German decency instead of abstract arguments shows that Americans began to warm to the people whom they had conquered.

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[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 16 March, 1945, 2.
[51] Ibid., December 4, 1944, 2.
[52] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 4 July, 1946, 2.

Further evidence of such a thawing is provided by the increased importance placed on German lives. As the occupation progressed, callous attitudes advocating the bombing of German civilians[53] or asserting that "All 'Good' Heinies [Are] Dead [Ones]"[54] were replaced with concerns over the welfare of Germans, both as individuals and collectively. One more commonly comes across letters such as those worrying about the well being of German bicyclists after nearly being run over by Americans in large trucks.[55] More generally, as early as mid-November 1945, prior to the arrival of widespread individual humanitarian aid from the United States, American contributors to "The B-Bag" worried about the food shortage and its impact on Germans. More specifically, the author of one particular letter suggested American-based solutions to the problem.[56] Another letter written in 1947 even went so far as to suggest that immoral German actions, such as promiscuity, stealing and black market activities, were normal and even to be expected given the desperate circumstances within Germany.[57] This newfound emphasis upon German welfare was both the cause and the symptom of another new trend, the normalization of American-German relations.

For some Americans in occupied Germany, relations with Germans became more acceptable as the occupation proceeded. Although fraternization with any German was strictly prohibited during the war, evidence shows that it occurred immediately when the

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[53] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 9 December 1944, 2.
[54] Ibid., 4 December, 1944, 2.
[55] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 28 February, 1946, 2.
[56] Ibid., 12 November, 1945, 2.
[57] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 20 October, 1947.

first American soldiers stepped onto German soil.[58] Not representative of popular opinion on the matter, but perhaps more reflective of the views of the newspaper's editors, the initial letters addressing the issue within "The B-Bag" were negative. They included such comments as "these [Germans] are *all* our enemy...sentimentality is stupid. Fraternization is criminal."[59] Although these types of comments never really abated within the pages of The Stars and Stripes, attitudes regarding interactions with the Germans slowly reversed, along with the official policy. Based on the lack of negative reaction to a letter published in 1946, it appears that by this time it was socially acceptable to admit that one had entered a German residence for a friendly visit.[60] The frequency of these interactions may well have led to more favourable assessments of Germans, partly because they showed American occupiers that many Germans were human beings and not the wretched creatures that they were portrayed to be during the war. As a result, Germans were no longer equated with being uncivilized barbarians.

Even more startling than the acceptance of American interactions with Germans was the reduction in hard-line rhetoric regarding the German nation. During the war, many believed that Germany was an abnormal nation with a desire to conquer the world.[61] For the duration of the Nazi regime, Germans were singled out in opinion polls as a rogue country that seemed to perpetually initiate world wars.[62] Once the war ended,

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[58] A letter written on September 14, 1944, complaining of a lack of adequate combat support during a battle in Germany because the back-up was consorting with Germans, is the first evidence of early fraternization. The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 20 September, 1944, 2.
[59] Ibid., 1 December, 1944, 2.
[60] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 22 October, 1946, 2.
[61] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 16 April, 1945, 2.
[62] With the establishment of the first, wide scale opinion polls conducted in the 1930's, 77% of Americans sampled suggested that if there was an instigator of the Great War, Germany was it. George Gallup and Claude Robinson, "American Institute of Public Opinion – Surveys, 1935-38," Public Opinion Quarterly,

the road towards a less negative view of the German nation was relatively short. By the end of 1946, some people were beginning to group Germany back within the normal community of nations.[63] Opinion polls conducted during the same period reflected that most Americans were more pre-occupied with the Cold War and the Soviet threat than with Germany. In March 1947, a paltry 6.5% of respondents feared that Germany wanted to dominate the world, as compared with 33% who believed the Soviet Union had the same goal. Even more compelling are the German results when compared to those who believed Great Britain and the United States had similar motives. Both countries garnered 6% and 3.25% respectively, placing Germany close to the same level as supposedly "normal" powers.[64] In another poll conducted in February 1947, only a little over one-fourth of the American public felt unfriendly towards the German people as a group.[65] Although Germany did have its reputation deeply tarnished by two major wars, the damage was not irreversible.

Not all of the reasons for the shifts in American opinion had to do with simple personal interactions and observations. The dissipation of hostile opinion was also influenced by American pursuit of self-interest. While it is true that Americans were concerned about German material conditions, some of the same proponents of charity favoured the practice mainly because they feared social unrest and disease and the impact

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1938 (2), 388. By January 1939, over three-fifths of respondents believed Germany would be responsible for the next major conflict: N. A., "American Institute of Public Opinion – Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1939 (3), 598. Then, in June 1944, 60% of respondents believed that Germans would prepare for another world war once vanquished during World War II: N.A., "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1944 (8), 455.

[63] Ibid., 20 November, 1946, 2.

[64] N.A., "The Quarter's Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1947 (11), 317-318.

[65] Ibid., 287.

that such conditions would have upon the American occupation effort.[66] Still others wanted to use food to gain German friendship,[67] possibly in anticipation of conflict with the Soviet Union. A particularly blatant example of this practice came from a GI who argued for the rationing of cigarettes to German veterans "as a means of spreading democracy," and thus creating a potentially likeminded ally. This attitude was not suggested due to any affinity for Germans; since the author stated that he could not "sympathize with the Krauts," but rather was intended only "to gain a good [self-interested] end,"[68] i.e., convincing Germans of the benefits of democracy. In all, pragmatism and not just the power of personal interactions may have affected some reversals of opinion.

These changes notwithstanding, a great deal of personal resentment towards Germans persisted amongst the occupiers. A large contingent of contributors to "The B-Bag" frequently protested that Germans were being treated too leniently. From protests at the height of the war dealing with the way that German POWs were being pampered -- "Is this supposed to be an all-out war or just one big social affair between the involved countries?"[69] -- to the question of feeding German employees at US mess halls during the occupation -- "The same people we fought with some months ago now seem to be on equal status with the American soldier"[70] -- myriad letter-writers suggested that Germans were not being treated with sufficient severity. Conversely, other letter-writers were skeptical of German claims that they were being treated too harshly. One author went so

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[66] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 12 November, 1945, 2.
[67] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 25 October, 1947, 2.
[68] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 30 April, 1946, 2.
[69] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 29 November, 1944, 2.
[70] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 February, 1946, 2.

far as to suggest that the food shortage was not really a problem at all. As far as he was concerned, "the Germans are not starving, they are still one of the best fed peoples in Europe," and that all they were out for was American sympathy.[71] Even more noteworthy was the regularity with which letters that reminded readers of German actions during the war were published in "The B-Bag." Appearing in the column at intervals of nearly every fourth month, such letters sought to harden opinion against Germans and never truly abated.[72] A typical letter would be written by a combat veteran who would question present attitudes towards Germans by repeating some dastardly German crime or policy during the war.[73] The simple goal of these letters was to advocate a negative reassessment of the German people by reminding the occupying American troops of their past indiscretions. More importantly, writing in this manner helped to illustrate the distrust and disdain for Germans that some Americans retained long into the occupation.

A number of factors contributed to these negative attitudes. First and foremost, a strong sense of ethnic prejudice afflicted many Americans in Germany. This prejudice is reflected in the decreasing, yet ever-present use of terms such as Heinies, Huns, Jerries, and Krauts to describe Germans. Such language was fuelled by an intense distaste for Germans as a result of the abhorrent actions committed during the Third Reich and the recent war. American occupiers consistently pointed to German atrocities as examples of the barbarity of their former foes and the German nation in general, using them to justify

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[71] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 25 March, 1946, 2.
[72] The last letter in this mould which appeared in "The B-Bag" was published in mid-July 1949. The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 July, 1949, 2.
[73] For a typical example of this formula, see Ex-GI USA, "Ex-GI Speaks from the States," Ibid., 22 January, 1947,2.

a more severe peace.[74] For example, in one letter a combat veteran railed against the overly friendly treatment of the "Heinies," who had killed his comrades.[75] Another reason for the negative attitudes regarding Germans was the suggestion that by being "soft" on Germans, the United States was paving the way for a rapid German resurgence. By being sympathetic to the German "plight," it was argued that Americans were providing Germans with the opening needed to revive their military ambitions,[76] potentially re-establishing the pattern of the inter-war period.[77] Closely linked to the previous notions, many Americans in Germany also believed that Germans, as conquered foes, needed to be punished for their actions. Punishment, it was believed, should be doled out in any and all ways possible, especially if it meant depriving the German people of food, treating them with disdain and denying them any sense of normalcy and comfort. As one author put it, the Germans should "shift themselves, and if they suffer some degree of discomfort, they can console themselves" in their memories of past strength.[78]

Such negative attitudes are apparent when taking a closer look at one issue in particular, namely German use of the rail system. Beginning in late 1946, many servicemen and their dependents complained of having to ride with "hordes of Germans"[79] on "dirty, smelly German trains."[80] American occupiers found being confined in close quarters with unfamiliar Germans was unacceptable. Instead of

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[74] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 12 October, 1946, 2.
[75] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, February 13, 1946, 2.
[76] Ibid., 7 September, 1945, 2 and The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 7 February, 1947, 2.
[77] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 18 August, 1945, 2.
[78] Ibid., 5 November, 1945, 2.
[79] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 11 March, 1948, 2.
[80] Ibid., 14 December, 1948, 2.

realizing that the conditions on these coaches were a result of the war and accepting them as they were, many Americans argued for a familiar solution to the perceived "problem." Segregating Germans from Americans during train trips became the answer for this group. A sense of xenophobia contributed to these suggestions. One particular contributor to "The B-Bag" claimed he was "insulted, humiliated, scrutinized and ridiculed" by the "Germans [who were] cramming us out of our seats, standing on our feet, and eating and singing practically on top of us."[81] Being surrounded by the "former" enemy in their own land, many Americans felt outnumbered and helpless.

These actions were fuelled more by bigotry than by the conditions on the trains. In the numerous complaints about the rail system in Germany, Americans were outraged that they had to be surrounded by Germans, yet they never complained about the same conditions that the Germans were simultaneously forced to endure. Never once was it suggested that conditions on the entire train system ought to be improved. Rather, the typical solution involved segregating the Allies from their former foes, in the form of American-only rail cars. One group of American travelers even went so far as to unilaterally impose a form of segregation by occupying the baggage compartment to avoid contact with Germans.[82]

In response to these segregation requests, the editors of The Stars and Stripes initially published official replies, attempting to regulate American attitudes about rail travel. These Editor's Notes stated either that some routes had an early, Americans-only

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[81] Ibid., 29 June, 1947, 2.
[82] Ibid., 25 May, 1947.

car,[83] or that the facilities were adequate and did not necessitate an American coach.[84] One particular disavowal of these requests issued by the Chief of Transport, EUCOM (European Command), claimed that American-funded trains were the best that they could have been, given the circumstances, and that the absence of an American compartment was appropriate.[85] However, in a surprising about-face, the American authorities capitulated by the end of 1948 and they called for the addition of American coaches on more trains.[86] This reversal of policy demonstrates the power of the average Americans' persistent resistance to authority in spite of pressure from the establishment to accept the status quo. Although similar segregation requests fell on deaf ears, particularly those regarding American swimming pools,[87] as well as a suggestion that barbed wire barriers be re-erected around the American enclave in Frankfurt,[88] the rail segregation issue marked a clear, albeit minor, victory for the majority of Americans versus the Army establishment.

Whether an American hated or liked Germans, the one thing almost all Americans believed was that they were the conquerors of Germany and were therefore superior to the "natives." One particular contributor to "The B-Bag" employed the term "We Come as Conquerors," to remind the readers of their status in Germany.[89] Intense hatred for Germans combined with a sense that the Allies had conquered Germany contributed to the flat-out rejection of any kind of German power or authority being wielded over

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[83] Ibid., 25 May, 1947, 2 and 30 May, 1947, 2.
[84] Ibid., 11 March, 1948, 2.
[85] Ibid., 11 March, 1948, 2.
[86] Ibid., 14 December, 1948, 2.
[87] Ibid., 11 July, 1947, 2.
[88] Ibid., 24 July, 1947, 2.
[89] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 August, 1945, 2.

Americans. Whether it meant taking road directions from Germans[90] or having wedding vows administered by a German and according to German customs[91] or being subjected to searches and having entry into the post-exchange determined by German employees,[92] all power held by Germans was resented. Even the American authorities got into the act, as in the cases of the Editor's Notes that responded to complaints about German employees checking American soldiers' bags. Reinforcing the predominant idea of American strength and German weakness, the replying officer claimed that German employees were not empowered to act if any cases of wrongdoing were found amongst American customers.[93] According to most of the occupiers, the average German was powerless in the face of American superiority.

A further consequence of this attitude was that many Americans became convinced that their status amongst the conquered Germans was fully warranted, entitling them to rights and privileges that were greater than those due to the German people. Occupying armies had believed such ideas for centuries, and much of the American contingent in Germany allowed this concept to guide their thinking on a number of issues. Ranging from the requisitioning of German property[94] to the heating of American barracks[95] to the entry and food distribution policies in military mess halls,[96] Americans believed that it was their right to be accorded preferential treatment over the occupied. As

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[90] Ibid., 23 January, 1946, 2.
[91] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 27 June, 1947, 2.
[92] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 10 October, 1946, 2 and The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 27 January, 1949, 2.
[93] Ibid.
[94] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 30 August, 1945 and Ibid., 11 October, 1945.
[95] Ibid., 8 December, 1945.
[96] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 11 November, 1947.

was the case with rail travel, Americans looked down upon Germans, demanding better material conditions for themselves, yet hardly protested at all for similar improvements to be made on behalf of Germans. This self-interested position on issues came increasingly into conflict with one of the main aims of the occupation, democratization.

Democratization was central to the larger American reorientation project within occupied Germany. Influenced by a strong desire for vengeance, occupation policy was also guided by a desire to pacify and normalize Germany. After all, an authoritarian and militarized Germany, which was viewed as having instigated two major wars within twenty-five years, was seen to be in desperate need of change. Hence the call for a complete overhaul of the institutions and systems deemed responsible for the Nazi aberration and the attempt at implementing a comprehensive program to achieve these ends. But it was not just the political and administrative systems that needed changing. The German "sheep"[97] who tolerated, if not supported, their Nazi leaders' policies and actions also needed to be transformed. The cornerstone of these ideas consisted of modifying the discredited German system of governance and introducing a form of democracy, thereby laying the preconditions for social change.

Opinion within the American contingent in Germany reflected almost complete acceptance of the notion that democracy would have to be imposed. A large number of letters published in "The B-Bag" illustrate a high level of awareness of the goal of democratizing Germany. As early as November 1944, some Americans realized that "there can be no peace... in Europe so long as Germans aren't convinced of the virtues of

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[97] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 30 April, 1945.

peace and democracy."[98] Committed to the goal and worried about its implementation, some Americans discussed how the democratization effort lacked coordination and focus, advocating better training in order to promote democracy amongst Germans.[99] Other Americans fretted that their compatriots were not fulfilling their duties as democratic role models in Germany. This group felt that certain Americans were failing to circulate with the German populace in order to provide a shining democratic example,[100] that some occupiers were setting a very poor example for Germans by their disgraceful public conduct, [101] or that others were counteracting the effects of democratization by denigrating the German people.[102] In some cases, the Editor's Note also served to support the cause of democracy. For example, in response to one soldier's letter requesting permission to assist a German in the rebuilding of his home, thereby supposedly helping to further the cause of democratization, the editor reinforced the idea, encouraging such positive relations.[103] With both the rank and file and the authorities supporting democratization, it is safe to assume that nearly every American was aware of the effort. The acceptance of democratization also marked a shift in the main preoccupation of Americans. The issue of whether all Germans were evil became moot. While it was believed that Germany was fundamentally flawed, the emphasis amongst Americans quickly shifted to how they could change the country they

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[98] Ibid., 27 November, 1944.
[99] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 October, 1945.
[100] Ibid., 2 April, 1946.
[101] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, June 24, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 30 August, 1947; and passim.
[102] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 25 February, 1946, The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt Germany, 10 November, 1947 and Ibid., 29 March, 1948.
[103] Ibid., 21 April, 1947, 2.

occupied, with many Americans believing democratization was a significant part of the answer.

The contributions of other letter-writers help to highlight some of the inherent conflicts and problems associated with the American democratization effort. First, and probably most importantly, some Americans realized that imposing through force a political system based on the idea of personal freedom of choice was undemocratic by its very nature.[104] Other letter-writers pointed out how American beliefs in the inferiority of Germans contradicted democratic notions of equality and thus dragged down democratization efforts.[105] Recognizing the damaging effects of anti-German actions and insults, one contributor suggested that Americans recognize the "*inalienable rights* (of Germans) and... respect them as individuals," mainly in order to further the cause of democracy more effectively.[106] Others recognized that property seizures through the requisitioning of German land and belongings for the purposes of the American military were arbitrary and contradictory to the right to own private property.[107] Some simply called into question the litany of American actions and policies which set a poor example of democracy for Germans.[108]

Other examples of American thoughts highlight how notions of democracy were refashioned to work in favour of American interests and against the democratization of the German people. One of the ironies of the occupation period is that a highly undemocratic institution, the U. S. Army, was assigned the task of transforming Germany

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[104] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 26 September, 1945, 2.
[105] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 29 August, 1946, 2.
[106] Ibid., 5 September, 1946, 2.
[107] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 30 August, 1947, 2.
[108] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 9 September, 1946, 2, The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 1 January, 1947, 2, and passim.

into a democratic nation. This paradox allowed low ranking American soldiers to call the Army's undemocratic practices into question, often at the expense of the project of democratizing Germany. For instance, one letter complained about Germans entering American-officer clubs, using democracy as a justification. Highly influenced by a conqueror's mentality that suggested Germans should not be allowed such privileges if any Americans are not, this enlisted man attacked the practice of allowing German entry into the clubs unless all Americans were afforded the honour. Instead of stating that all people should be allowed access equally, the letter-writer took the opportunity to argue for the banning of Germans in the club.[109] The author then stated that the Army's policy on entry was not equal for all soldiers and therefore was undemocratic.[110] A similar letter by another occupier took the opportunity to argue for the undemocratic and exclusionary segregation of German trains, mainly by asking if the present situation was democratic for Americans.[111] Clearly, these authors ignored the goal of promoting the ideal of democracy in favour of furthering their own agendas.

Although democratization involved the importation of a political system, to Americans it was much more. Consistently "The B-Bag" contributors evoked the term democracy to describe the inculcation of beliefs and concepts that were specific to the American democratic experience. Notions of sportsmanship, fair play,[112] and patriotism, as exhibited by the respect shown during the playing of one's national anthem,[113] were presented as components of the democratic example that Americans wished to set. While

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[109] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 July, 1948, 2.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid., 29 June, 1947, 2.
[112] Ibid., 1 December, 1947, 2.
[113] Ibid., 18 October, 1948, 2

a tenuous link can be made between these ideas and democracy in a broad sense of the term, some Americans felt that these were important components of their own distinct brand of democracy, although this model was well worth promoting. The notion of exporting an American brand of democracy was even explicit in the message of some letter-writers. One missive rather overstated this sentiment in suggesting that renaming German roads after famous American leaders would stand as an "advertise[ment] of *American* Democracy."[114] Another letter-writer advocated a more streamlined democratization effort, delineating between what he called democracy and religious philosophy/morality. He suggested that Americans had been conflating the effort to democratize Germany with a wider moral reorganization of Germany along American lines.[115] Another contributor underscored what had become the goal of many the American occupiers. While complaining of the negative impact that cat-calls had during movies where Germans were present, he suggested that such practices be banned "to show an [accurate] example of American life."[116] So, while democratization, and to a lesser extent re-education, were the buzz-words used to describe what came to be known as the American reorientation effort, what they really entailed were the imposition of American practices and an American way of life.

The effort to export the American ideals and norms did not stop at just political systems. While there were calls for a liberalization of the vaunted German education system[117] and German industry,[118] some of the occupiers carried the issue into other

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[114] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 9 December, 1945.
[115] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 4 March, 1947.
[116] Ibid., 28 January, 1948.
[117] For an in-depth analysis of the issue, see James F. Tent, Mission on the Rhine: Re-education and Denazification in American-Occupied Germany (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

fields. One American suggested providing copies of American magazines in the German language in order to fill the void left by the banning of Nazi magazines.[119] Other contributors suggested improving German labour processes. In a paternalistic way, some agricultural practices, such as the use of one bull in a job for which Germans used two[120] and the adoption of corn as an antidote for food shortages,[121] were suggested by Americans in an effort to improve German agricultural efficiency and help to solve the food dilemma. Even German rubble clearing efforts were questioned as one author suggested using American soldiers to finish the job.[122] This suggestion hinged upon the supposed superiority of the American work ethic over perceived German laxity. One writer went so far as to suggest that German government be staffed with Americans, because too many Nazis continued to occupy government posts.[123] While some of these examples still reflect early nineteenth century American views about German labour efficiency, all show how Americans were convinced of the superiority of their beliefs, methods and manpower.

Feelings of American superiority were exemplified by American calls for improving motor safety and regulation. It was in this area that paternalistic American notions about improving German practices and laws became most clear. As the occupation period progressed, Americans became fixated on the issue of automobile safety because it endangered the lives of Americans -- something highlighted by the

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[118] To understand the extent of the American effort more thoroughly, see Volker, R. Berghahn, The Americanisation of West German Industry, 1945-1973 (New York: Berg, 1986).
[119] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 30 October, 1945.
[120] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 31 August, 1947.
[121] Ibid., 27 February, 1948.
[122] Ibid., 7 September, 1947, 2.
[123] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 6 January, 1946, 2.

death of General George Patton in late 1945-- as well as threatened the lives of Germans. One of the first letters to address the driving issue placed the blame for the problem squarely on American soldiers. Tying the issue to the position of Americans as role models for Germans, the author suggested that American drivers were projecting a negative image of Americans by driving recklessly.[124] In response to this observation, a second letter was published stating that American drivers were forced to drive in such a fashion, because German civilians walked "in the middle of the street" and did not move for oncoming vehicles.[125] The latter sentiments were echoed for years throughout "The B-Bag" columns, as Americans marvelled at German pedestrians who "step casually in front of [a] car with no more caution or consciousness than if they were sleepwalking."[126] These complaints about German pedestrians were linked to beliefs that Germans were a genuine danger to themselves due to their own ignorance. One American suggested that the phenomenon resulted from German people thinking that automobiles were the equivalent of the much slower "horse drawn carts,"[127] linking their ignorance to a type of technological inadequacy and backwardness that is reminiscent of earlier beliefs regarding German agricultural techniques. German pedestrians were not the only cause for concern amongst American drivers. The occupiers also chastised German drivers for their inconsiderate and dangerous driving habits. Some complained that they had been forced off the road by German drivers who had "laughed about it,"[128] while others marvelled at the "stupidity and carelessness" of German drivers that had led to an

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[124] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 6 July, 1946, 2.
[125] Ibid., 20 July, 1946, 2.
[126] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 10 November, 1948, 2.
[127] Ibid., 31 May, 1947, 2.
[128] Ibid., 25 March, 1948, 2.

accident.[129] In all, the German people were singled out by their American occupiers for their negative contribution to hazardous driving conditions.

If motor safety was seen as a problem, then the most commonly offered solutions came in the form of American safety campaigns[130] and amendments to the German legal code.[131] Echoing other paternalistic suggestions for improvements of German society, Americans who suggested potential remedies did so assuming that the Germans did not have the knowledge or the ability to solve problems in their own country without American help. Contributors to "The B-Bag" recommended using the American military constabulary in conjunction with German civilian police on these projects,[132] possibly because this would mean the employment of American know-how, although they also acknowledged German material and manpower limitations. Supporting the former explanation were the thoughts of an American letter-writer who suggested that all German drivers be subject to an AMG-administered driving test before being allowed to drive.[133] Supporting the latter account was a suggestion by another American letter-writer who asked that driving safety be improved by having American authorities provide German drivers with scarce light bulbs if German authorities could not keep drivers properly equipped.[134] While each claim seems valid, there is no doubt that Americans felt that their assistance and rules were indispensable in the effort to make German roads safer.

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[129] Ibid., 13 March, 1948, 2.
[130] Ibid., 10 November, 1948, 2.
[131] Ibid., 2 October, 1947, 2 and Ibid., 21 December, 1947, 2.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid., 11 April, 1947.
[134] Ibid., 25 March, 1948, 2.

Initially, the editors of "The B-Bag" reacted with staunch opposition to the "solutions" these letters offered. The common refrain expressed in the Editor's Note was that many accidents could be averted simply by driving in a defensive manner.[135] Placing faith in the German authorities, another Editor's Note stressed that the various levels of German government had taken on the task of educating the German people on the subject.[136] However, faced with mounting pressure and the persistence of the problem, the American authorities finally gave in to the demands of American soldiers in Germany in early 1949. In response to a claim that "since we are the occupying powers it would appear that we could demand...corrective action from the German civil authorities," an American official from OMGUS replied that the German Länder had been instructed to address deficiencies in traffic laws and enforcement "as a result of this and other reports of [a] similar nature."[137] Once again, troop resistance triumphed over the American Military Government's inflexibility, and the American occupiers had their beliefs in the pre-eminence of American practices reinforced.

American public opinion regarding Germans has endured a number of changes over time. Influenced by observations derived from personal interactions, knowledge about major events in Germany and the pursuit of pure self-interest, American opinion has vacillated from the great optimism of the mid-nineteenth century to the plummeting lows that followed the two consecutive world wars fought against Germany. In spite of

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[135] Ibid., 13 March, 1948.
[136] Ibid., 10 November, 1948, 2.
[137] Ibid., 16 March, 1949, 2.

the high levels of Germanophobia typical of 1917 and 1944, neither condition was permanent.

When the American military commenced operations within Germany in the fall of 1944, soldiers were shocked by what they witnessed. Up until that point in time, Americans had borne a cautious animosity against Germany, guided by a hatred for the Nazi leadership and a sense that the German people were too easily led. All of that changed once the ravages of war took their toll and the widespread abuses of Nazism were viewed through American eyes. Although a vocal minority preached reason and pragmatism, a majority of Americans passed negative judgment upon all Germans. Influenced by a vengeful trend in general public opinion, the readers of The Stars and Stripes initially gave in to emotion and indulged in an all-or-nothing sense of German goodness.

Although persistent, hatred eventually, albeit unevenly, abated, as Americans became more acquainted with their charges. While opinions regarding Germans in the general sense were still guided by a degree of bigotry, self-satisfaction and intolerance, observations derived from personal interactions strongly influenced how Germans were perceived on an individual level. These interactions eventually led to an altruistic concern for German welfare and a less negative pattern of relations between conqueror and conquered. A more positive image of the German nation developed.

One of the keys to solving "the German problem" came in the form of democratization. The commitment to democratization marked a shift in opinion once again, as almost all Americans came to believe that Germans could be changed and therefore were not innately bad. However, the commitment to democratization did not

really entail much of change from previous beliefs. Building upon a victor's logic which suggested that the conquered were inferior, the democratization effort came to reflect a strong sense of superiority over the former enemy. Not only was the American system of government seen as superior, but so too were American methods, laws and manpower. In perhaps the biggest irony about the democratization effort, most Americans seeking to democratize Germany opted to circumvent German choice in favour of imposing American methods and know-how upon the German people.

Chapter Three

Exposing the Underbelly:
Understanding American Beliefs and Preconceptions Through Comments on Nazis and Nazism

If Americans slowly, albeit unevenly, warmed to the German people as a whole, the same cannot be said about their feelings for the members of the Nazi Party or for the ideology that the movement represented. With the human cost of war in the tens of millions, including hundreds of thousands of American soldiers, and the continent of Europe in a shambles, Americans in Germany were not in a forgiving mood. The hatred of Nazism was intense and wide-ranging. However, to conclude that this is the end to the story is both simplistic and false. The topic of the Nazis and Nazism serves many useful purposes. It gives us insights into the various feelings regarding different Nazis by American observers, showing that Americans believed that not all Nazis were created equal. The topic also highlights American anxieties about the occupation effort as a whole, as many Americans struggled to uphold the goal of denazification in the face of other concerns. Most importantly, it serves as a window into American relations not only with Germans, but amongst themselves. By analyzing the way in which Americans used Nazism as a part of a stylistic device in their letters-to-the-editors of The Stars and Stripes, we can see some of the less flattering aspects of American policy and practice.

Negative opinions about the Nazi regime and its supporters remained static throughout the occupation, in the minds of the American occupiers. Collectively the Nazis were to blame for the horrors of the war due to their militaristic ethos, war-mongering policies, and ultimately depraved actions. Unlike the case with the First World War, there was no denying that the German government planned and instigated the

conflict. Utterly disgusted with the results of such policies and actions, the American soldiers who overran Germany resorted to the use of derogatory names and terms to show that they understood Nazism to be responsible for the war. The Nazis, it was suggested, were "maniacs" who were worse than the "wretched Japanese" because they claimed "to be civilized."[1] Knowledge of the Holocaust and the horrors of the concentration and death camps were exhibited by the use of such terms as "killers"[2] and "dirty, rotten, murderous (sons of) bitches."[3] A nod to militarism and the role it played in shaping Nazism is given by a contributor to "The B-Bag," who referred to the Nazis as "war-crazy."[4] Another author believed that the central goal of Nazi ideology was world domination, commenting towards the end of the war that the Nazis were "complete failures in their attempt to Nazify the world."[5] Perhaps the best indication that Americans were universally repulsed by the Nazis is the fact that throughout five years of American Military Government (AMG) rule in Germany, not once did a single American defend the Nazis in the letters published in the columns of The Stars and Stripes.

However, the insults did not stop at derogatory names. A more thorough analysis of beliefs regarding Nazis in general reveals that Americans engaged in a practice with rather deeper implications than name-calling, namely dehumanization. Although certainly not new or unique to the situation, Americans went about portraying Nazis as vile and base in an effort to discredit their deeds and justify the retaliation that the occupiers were visiting upon them. When dehumanizing the Nazis, most Americans would liken them to

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[1] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 27 December, 1944.
[2] Ibid, 1 February, 1945.
[3] Ibid, 2 February, 1945.
[4] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 23 February, 1946.
[5] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 20 October, 1944.

animals who were dangerous, filthy or disease ridden. To some authors, the Nazis were "dirty ratzies,"[6] while to others they were "pigs"[7] or "low…snakes" who were actually lower than the snakes to which they were compared.[8] Others considered Nazi methods "'human beast' like."[9] By equating Nazis with base creatures, Americans could then argue for inhumane solutions to the problem of their existence. An example of one such comment suggested that American troops should adopt a strategy similar to the Russian practice of taking few German soldiers and Nazis prisoner, while killing most of the "rats."[10] Once the war had ended, another letter-writer recommended that the occupation forces should "exterminate them [upper echelon Nazis and their zealous supporters] as we would typhus-infested rats."[11] In all, it seems that dehumanization of the Nazis was used first to rationalize American efforts in combat and then to advocate for draconian solutions to the Nazi problem during the occupation.

Negatively stereotyping the Nazis was another way that certain Americans discredited their foes. Some questioned the legitimacy of the Nazi regime as they were labeled criminals[12] and compared to gangsters.[13] A more oft-cited stereotype frequently put forward during the war involved the regime's renowned mastery of propaganda. Using the infamous Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels as a reference point, Americans linked the dissemination of any information they deemed counterproductive to

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[6] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 23 January, 1945.
[7] Ibid., 2 March, 1946.
[8] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 27 January, 1945.
[9] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 6 October, 1945.
[10] Ibid., 2 February, 1945.
[11] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 May, 1945.
[12] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 7 November, 1944.
[13] Ibid., 16 October, 1944 and The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 16 October, 1945.

Nazi propaganda efforts. Specifically, sympathetic portrayals of the German people in general were seen as coming straight from "Herr Goebbels,"[14] while the premature discussion of peace, which was viewed as hindering the American war effort, was also supposed to be the result of Goebbels' propaganda.[15] Other segments of the German population, including German expatriates in the United States, were simultaneously criticized for spreading propaganda to aid the Nazi cause,[16] while propaganda was claimed to be used by others to help shelter Nazis from the wrath of those whom they had recently occupied.[17] Even well after war's end, letter-writers were still suggesting that Americans were falling victim to the "planned propaganda" of Nazis lurking in the shadows.[18] Portraying the Nazis as propagandists and thus as deceivers rendered the Nazis even more foul and dangerous, because the American occupiers were unable to trust such shifty foes in any manner or at any time.

Implicit in American scorn for the Nazis was a belief in American superiority. After all, Americans never spoke of themselves as "baby-killers" nor did they suggest that they committed atrocities against the people of Germany. Their ideas about the inhuman nature of their Nazi foes, coupled with their contempt for Nazi ideology, was fuelled by the conviction that democratic morals and methods were superior to the Nazi cause in every manner. After all, what human being considers the rat a higher form of life than themselves?

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[14] Ibid., 16 April, 1945.
[15] Ibid., 21 March, 1945.
[16] Ibid., 3 April, 1945.
[17] Ibid., 9 December, 1944.
[18] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 March, 1946.

If Nazis, in the abstract sense, were held responsible for the actions of the German nation during the war, not all Americans believed in an equal distribution of guilt. Reflecting one of the main problems associated with the denazification process, Americans grappled with trying to establish levels of culpability for Nazi crimes. Untangling the connections between different kinds of Nazis, as well as the relationship between the party and various social groups, such as businessmen, the German General staff and the Prussian Junkers, was a complex and difficult process. Some fervent anti-Nazis came up with certain criteria to separate those who were loyal and rabid supporters from those who were not. One example of this system, similar to the official criteria for the denazification process, placed all Germans into four different categories: Non-Nazis; Forced Nazis; Voluntary Nazis; and War Criminals (all SS and high ranking Nazis), and then offered up incrementally worse treatments for each group according to the level of direct involvement in Nazi crimes.[19] Others managed to single out German elites as being more responsible for the Nazi atrocities, because they were seen as responsible for the Nazi accession to power and for abetting Hitler's long-term stranglehold on the government and state apparatus. While some wanted unspecified retaliation against these groups exclusively,[20] others favoured outright extermination of such people.[21] However, unlike the debate about the putative "good Germany," where one side uncritically accepted the simple premise of inherent good and evil, this attempt at categorization reflected a more complex understanding of Nazi Party organization and methods, one that placed the leaders first in line in an effort to assign responsibility.

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[19] Ibid., 16 October, 1945.
[20] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 7 May, 1945.
[21] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 May, 1945.

These categorizations offer an excellent insight into how Americans felt about the Nazi leadership. Perhaps unconsciously influenced by their own Army's emphasis on the chain of command and responsibility ultimately lying with senior leaders, there was no dispute amongst American occupiers that the Nazi leadership was ultimately to blame for the brutality of the Second World War. Indeed, the only controversy seemed to surround the nature of the inevitable punishment that would be meted out. While one contributor to "The B-Bag" suggested immediate execution,[22] another favoured a term of intense forced labour directly followed by a public hanging on a fixed date.[23] So strong was the disdain for the Nazi leaders and their cohorts in the German general staff that one author suggested foregoing execution in front of a firing squad, the traditional style of execution for convicted enemy officers.[24] Instead, the letter-writer advocated the execution of these men through hanging, as in the case of "criminals," thereby renouncing German Wehrmacht and Nazi claims of military legitimacy and preventing the creation of revered military martyrs.[25] Universal condemnation followed by swift punishment for the remains of the Nazi leadership was the option that the American readership of The Stars and Stripes supported.

As for feelings about individual leaders, the readership was in agreement on this issue also. As previously mentioned, contributors to the letters columns frequently maligned the manipulative tactics of Josef Goebbels. They also referred to the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, as a "monster"[26] and foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop as

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[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 16 October, 1945.
[24] Ibid., 16 December, 1945.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., 28 September, 1945.

a war profiteer.[27] Unimpressed by his status as a World War I flying ace, one author opined that the honour of guarding Hermann Goering lay not in the fact that he was a great leader, but that the building in which he was being held was heated, a rarity at the time in Nuremberg.[28] The ultimate symbol of Nazism, Adolf Hitler was also the source of derogatory and dehumanizing comments. From letters that likened him to a monkey in a circus sideshow[29] to those that suggest exiling him so as not to make a martyr out of him,[30] Americans resorted to name-calling yet were apprehensive about the wrath that Hitler could potentially inspire. However, they were wholly resolved to see him to his defeat. In spite of the allure of demobilization, American soldiers reaffirmed their commitment to his demise: "Sure we wanna go home—but we don't want to go home until it's over here. We want to be here when Hitler and the rest of his mob are completely rubbed out."[31] Even after his death a certain morbid curiosity kept thoughts fixed on the Austrian-born dictator. Although none stated that they admired him, two different letter-writers protested after having made the trip to his Berchtesgaden retreat, only to be denied access.[32] In short, Americans despised members of the Nazi leadership, yet they were oddly transfixed by some of them even after they succumbed to suicide, imprisonment and execution.

What is particularly puzzling about the interest in the Nazi leadership is that next to no attention was paid to the trials at Nuremberg within "The B-Bag" column of The

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[27] Ibid., 14 February, 1946.
[28] Ibid., 24 January, 1946.
[29] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 12 April, 1945.
[30] Ibid., 25 January, 1945.
[31] Ibid., 16 October, 1944.
[32] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 23 August, 1945 and Ibid., 28 September, 1945.

Stars and Stripes. In spite of the fact that the trials were covered regularly within the newspaper, and that exclusive features about the trials and their defendants were published directly beside "The B-Bag" column for 21 straight days during August and September 1946, only two letters were ever published about the trials. One of these letters was printed at the end of the trials and requested that the pictures of the public executions be published in the newspaper.[33] The other letter was published a couple of years after the conclusion of the trials and questioned whether judicial punishments fit a crime within the Nuremberg context.[34] Neither letter expressed concern over the fact that any of the surviving leaders implicated in the Nazi regime were being let off completely or were still at large. Perhaps reflecting a sense that Nazi leaders had either been punished or had escaped punishment via suicide, there is no evidence that the liberty of many high-ranking Nazis was a concern to the American occupiers.

If Americans no longer feared the spectre of Nazi leaders who might be active in Germany, their feelings were quite different regarding other Nazis. Americans seemed particularly pre-occupied with the infiltration of Nazis into German civilian government and other denazified institutions. Beginning with the so-called Aachen debacle, where the American-installed mayor of the city was discovered to have had links to the Gestapo,[35] Americans became consumed with the prospect of Nazis retaining their posts. Nazis who had managed to retain power were believed to have infiltrated all areas of society, from civil government to law enforcement to education. Even cultural institutions such as the Vienna symphony orchestra were not immune to the accusations that Nazis remained in

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[33] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 5 November, 1946.
[34] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 14 July, 1949.
[35] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 8 March, 1945.

place.[36] Nazis were deemed responsible for thwarting American occupation efforts such as democratization[37] and thus some saw their dismissal as essential for the success of the occupation.[38]

Evoking the spectre of Nazism at a time when one of the expressed goals of the occupation was to denazify Germany, the nay-sayers exploited American insecurities about relative German autonomy and numerical inferiority. Letter-writers commonly noted that "instances of Nazis still governing Germany are numerous... when will we stop letting the other guy do it."[39] The familiar argument of Americans falling prey to German propaganda and friendliness was also cited as another example of Americans being "too damn soft hearted."[40] Some even claimed to either know of a confessed Nazi working in AMG offices[41] or of incidents where qualified resistors to Nazism were being denied positions in the bureaucracy in favour of Nazis.[42] Although one letter defended the procedure followed in screening Germans for Nazi pasts,[43] the overwhelming sentiment of American personnel in Germany was one of stubborn skepticism, as they were convinced that Nazis remained in positions of power and they were determined to root them out.[44]

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[36] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 15 March, 1946.
[37] Ibid., 11 October, 1945.
[38] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 28 November, 1946.
[39] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 6 January, 1946.
[40] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 2 May, 1945.
[41] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 15 March, 1946.
[42] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 29 September, 1946.
[43] Ibid., 9 October, 1946.
[44] Although more research needs to be done on the matter, there may have been a link between the desire to eliminate Nazis from public positions and the phenomenon of punishing little Nazis more than their superiors. For more information on the matter see Anna J. and Richard L. Merritt, eds., Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys, 1945-1949, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970) , 37; and John Gimbel, A German Community under American Occupation: Marburg, 1945-1952, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961), 160.

The removal of Nazis from powerful positions within German society was a goal of the denazification process, but not its only aspect. Avoiding another world conflict instigated by Germany was the main motive for the denazification project. Eerily reminiscent of the World War I phenomenon where Americans equated the German Empire with the Kaiser himself,[45] some occupiers utilized the term Hitlerism as a synonym for Nazism.[46] During the war, some Americans were disturbed by the possibility of active Nazi resistance to American authority within Germany,[47] while others believed in the existence of a Nazi fifth column in the United States.[48] These people believed that both groups would aid in a Nazi revival and sought to have these alarming trends curbed. Others sought to avoid creating martyrs out of the Nazi leadership by having Hitler exiled[49] and having Mein Kampf taught in German schools in order to ensure that German children would not revere their fallen leader,[50] all in the hope of discrediting Nazism and avoiding resurgence.

While some sought to expose Nazism through dialogue, most Americans in Germany wanted to destroy all reminders of Nazism. For instance, the singular instance of one author favouring the teaching of Mein Kampf was greatly outnumbered by contributions wishing to use Nazi books as fuel for heating[51] or those that wanted to

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[45] Frank Trommler, "Inventing the Enemy; German-American Cultural Relations, 1900-1917," in., Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the era of World War I, 1900-1924. Hans-Jurgen Schroeder, ed. (Providence, RI: Berg Publishing, 1993), 103.
[46] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 23 March, 1945; and Ibid., 28 March, 1945.
[47] See The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 27 November, 1944; Ibid., 5 December, 1944; Ibid., 8 March, 1945; and The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 13 April, 1946.
[48] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 3 April, 1945; and The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 27 August, 1945.
[49] Ibid., 25 January, 1945.
[50] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 16 November, 1945.
[51] Ibid., 22 September, 1945.

destroy Nazi war monuments.[52] Guided by the knowledge that symbols were integral to Nazi ideology, many contributors to "The B-Bag" wanted to rid Germany of anything that might trigger memories of Nazism. From Nazi and Wehrmacht uniforms[53] to streets named after Nazis[54] to the continued appearance of the swastika,[55] Americans desired the destruction of all symbols used by the Third Reich. Conscious of the link between remnants of the past and their potential to shape the future, Americans favoured elimination of symbols instead of the more time consuming and less certain method of educating Germans about their Nazi past.

What this criticism of the denazification process amongst American occupiers reveals is a deep-seated anxiety about the integrity of the occupation policy. Americans consistently commented that Nazis were being let back into positions of power, or that existing Nazi symbols needed to be eradicated, because they recognized that American occupation policy was inchoate or that key elements of policy were not being applied. Beginning as early as the last months of the war, one American voiced his concern over the lack of a clearly articulated occupation policy and the potential problems that might ensue.[56] Another even went so far as to contrast Americans unfavourably with the Nazis, because the Nazis at least, as far as he saw it, had a plan with which they governed their occupied territories.[57] Eventually, Americans started to criticize the way their country's woolly policy was being implemented. Some began to see the rehiring of Nazis as an

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[52] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Bavaria, 19 August, 1946.
[53] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 27 October, 1945; and Ibid., 10 December, 1945.
[54] Ibid., 27 August, 1945.
[55] Ibid., 11 September, 1945; and The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 8 May, 1947.
[56] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 14 November, 1944.
[57] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 10 November, 1945.

aspect of this problem, since the practice contradicted one of the few clearly defined occupation policies in favour of addressing shortages in qualified manpower.[58] The continued existence of Nazi symbols and insignia did not help matters either. One letter-writer, influenced by the goal of denazification, was dumbfounded by the fact that under the terms of the Geneva Convention, Nazi POWs could continue to wear Nazi-inspired uniforms.[59] So, while some Americans suggested that occupation policy lacked content, others claimed that the small amount of content that was clearly stated, such as the denazification stipulation, was being subverted in favour of short term needs.

Some Americans in Germany expressed their reservations regarding the denazification process through sarcasm. One particular letter-writer, exasperated by the ever-shrinking number of Nazis punished, heavily laced his criticism of the process when he stated that the AMG "have yet to find a Nazi among the Germans... Is it possible that all the Nazis were killed during the war?"[60] Others used sarcasm to show their disapproval of specific incidents of lenient treatment of Nazis or of the process in general. During the war, Americans criticized the practice of providing "Nazi" POWs with cigarettes by stating that it was "only fitting" that "Nazi murderers" be given tobacco after they had killed wounded and defenseless Allied soldiers.[61] In a scathing indictment of the situation as a whole, one author questioned whether "Hitler fully realizes what he's missing by being so obstinate [in not surrendering to the Allies]?"[62]

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[58] Ibid., 17 August, 1945.
[59] Ibid., 10 December, 1945.
[60] Ibid., 23 February, 1946.
[61] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 30 November, 1944.
[62] Ibid., 2 April, 1945.

While some contributors to the letters columns of The Stars and Stripes used sarcasm to criticize the treatment of Nazis, others used a much more common device, negative comparison, as a way to illustrate broader points not only about the Nazis, but about various aspects of American operations in Germany. Using a negative comparison meant that Nazi actions and beliefs were used as a direct or indirect point of comparison with the deeds or ideas of Americans and other opponents of the Nazis. Often a metaphor, it often allowed authors to portray things that they opposed in a negative light, thus discrediting the targets of criticism through a tenuous association with Nazism. For example, a typical letter using negative comparison was printed in "The B-Bag" shortly after the end of the war. In response to a recommendation by a junior officer for mandatory, five year terms of service for those re-enlisting in the army of occupation, a decorated non-commissioned officer replied by directly comparing the suggestion to German slave labour practices.[63] By so doing, the second letter-writer tarnished the argument of the first by making a direct connection between the initial contributor's ideas and Nazism. Similar comparisons were made about the collective guilt camp, when an opponent compared their hate campaign against the German people to the Nazi tactic of instilling hatred.[64] Still others suggested that Paris Military Police acted in a manner akin to the Gestapo,[65] while others proclaimed that German law enforcement officers used "Hitler-like terror tactics... ordered by [a] Himmler-like monster."[66] Authors of letters published in The Stars and Stripes wielded negative comparisons to support their own

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[63] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 May, 1945.
[64] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 10 April, 1945.
[65] Ibid., 4 December, 1945.
[66] Ibid., 28 September, 1945.

arguments and to silence the opposition. After all, who would rally to the aid of anyone who supported ideas or practices akin to Nazism?

An extension of this process involved debasing the target of negative comparison by using "guilt by association." Here, the authors would use evidence of prior association or approval of the Nazi regime to further tarnish the reputations or arguments of opponents. One letter-writer questioned why the United States Legion's Distinguished Service Medal was awarded to newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, when Hearst had supposedly been guilty of a prior relationship with the Nazi regime. Thus, claimed the letter-writer, the honour was unjustified.[67] Charles Lindbergh's isolationist sentiments were attacked by another author who pointed out that Lindbergh had supported the Nazis in a number of ways throughout the 1930's.[68] Thus, the achievements of men like Hearst and Lindbergh were dismissed by certain contributors to "The B-Bag" because of the previous ties of such men to Nazism.

Practitioners of negative comparison did not always have negative aims. Sometimes, letter-writers would fashion their comparisons in an effort to open rather than close topics for debate. This was usually done by contributors who would compare issues associated with the occupation to Nazi methods or dealings in such a fashion as to suggest American impropriety. These comparisons helped illuminate such issues as the hypocrisy of AMG and the contradiction between occupation policy and actual practice in the U.S. zone.

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[67] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 5 February, 1946.
[68] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 5 March, 1945.

One ongoing debate of this sort within "The B-Bag" involved incidents at the Litchfield guardhouse, where US soldiers held as prisoners were abused by their American military police. Contributors to the column used negative comparisons to provoke thought on different aspects of the problem and on American conduct more broadly. The most obvious comparison/criticism revolved around the treatment of prisoners. Alluding to the vivid imagery of Nazis killing Allied POWs and concentration camp prisoners, some authors likened the abuse at Litchfield to the treatment that was meted out in German POW camps[69] and even in the notorious Dachau concentration camp.[70] Implying an American cover-up or uneasiness in publicizing his own army's misdeeds, one letter-writer questioned why Americans seemed to have access to an abundance of information on the Nazi massacre of Allied POWs, but was not given the same access to information on the Litchfield case.[71] Suggesting that justice may not have been done on the matter, another writer compared the prosecution of the Litchfield tormenters to the war crimes trials of Nazi leaders at Nuremberg and questioned why American commanding officers were not held responsible for the actions of their troops.[72] Thus, the issues tackled in relation to the Litchfield case exposed some of the contradictions between the harsh and puritanical treatment of the Nazi enemy versus the relatively lenient and inconsistent treatment of Americans involved in similar cases of cruelty and maltreatment.

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[69] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 24 August, 1945.
[70] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 22 September, 1946.
[71] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 24 August, 1945.
[72] Ibid., 8 November, 1945.

Another issue that was in the forefront of some American minds revolved around racism. Although Nazi ideology was overtly and proudly racist, the American Army, and American society in general, claimed to be democratic, favouring equal rights, and by extension, equal treatment for all. Some commentators realized the contradiction between ideals and practices and sought to draw attention to it. Specifically, one commentator claimed that some negative American arguments regarding the marriage of American soldiers to German women were reminiscent of racist Nazi ideas, because both emphasized the superiority of one group over another.[73] Others commented on the relationships between groups in American society. In particular, one person likened the discrimination that African-American soldiers received in the American Army to the racist policies of the Nazis,[74] while another utilized an anecdote involving the rough treatment that an American soldier gave to an African-American woman to illustrate a parallel between Nazi racist beliefs and those of American soldiers.[75] In all three cases, American moral superiority and the contrast between the American way and Nazism were implicitly questioned, given the commonalities between the racist tendencies or actions of each group.

The single biggest issue addressed by using negative comparisons involved the use of American propaganda and censorship methods. Using negative comparisons in both the positive and negative way, some Americans criticized the practices employed by The Stars and Stripes in particular, and by AMG in general. Beginning at the start of the occupation, Americans consistently raised issues regarding the use of censorship and

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[73] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 31 May, 1946.
[74] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 16 November, 1945.
[75] Ibid., 26 October, 1945.

propaganda in The Stars and Stripes. Illustrating the tension between the goals of winning the war at all costs and that of remaining morally superior to the Nazis, arguments for and against the use of propaganda were fierce. The initial letter that kicked off the debate suggested a morally outraged author, who compared the daily's editorials to the "one-minded publications Hitler has been punching out to the German nation for ten years" and stated that the goal of the paper "is merely to keep us informed... [so]don't expect me to swallow everything you hand out."[76] The letters that responded were just as critical of such sentiments as the initial letter was of the newspaper. One strongly worded rebuttal suggested that the author "listen to Jerry calling,"[77] an obvious reference to German propaganda, thus implying that there were only two points of view, and if one was not supporting the American side, then one must be against it. Another contributor retorted that Americans must fight fire with fire and utilize propaganda in an all-out effort to win the war.[78] Clearly Americans were divided by the issue of whether the tactics employed by the Nazis, such as propaganda and censorship, should have been used by their side as well.

Once the outcome of the war appeared more certain, some letter-writers abhorred the use of propaganda and censorship because of its association with Nazism. One contributor argued that the publication of a photograph depicting the sacrifices associated with war in The Stars and Stripes, to further the noble goal of motivating American troops to victory, made "Hitler's propaganda gang look like a kindergarten."[79] Another

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[76] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 30 November, 1944.
[77] Ibid., 9 December, 1944.
[78] Ibid., 9 December, 1944.
[79] Ibid., 8 February, 1945.

person decried the use of censorship in The Stars and Stripes and other newspapers even when it came to censoring Nazi propaganda, because he stressed, ironically enough, that it was a Nazi tactic.[80] However, given the continued existence of the offices of the Army and Navy censors until late 1945, this is one situation where practical considerations outweighed the resistance of the rank and file, and their position did not result in a reversal of policy until well after the conflict had ceased.

Once the war was over, others criticized the use of censorship by the AMG and the American government in general. For instance, one author complained that withholding nuclear technology from the rest of the world smacked of "Hitlerism."[81] In an exchange that broke the dialogue-ending pattern that a negative comparison to Nazism usually evoked, the editors of The Stars and Stripes curtly responded to a letter-writer who had complained of the supposed ban on Wagnerian music imposed by AMG, suggesting the ban was akin to Nazi censorship tactics.[82] In the "Editor's Note" that followed, the Director of Information Control Division refuted the claim, first denying the existence of any such ban. Then, in an ironic twist, he used the very same negative comparison to regulate reader response to the author, claiming that "The... letter, cogent, well written, specious, is Hitler technique at its best."[83] What is intriguing about the whole debate surrounding censorship and propaganda is that not one person linked the destruction of Nazi symbols and culture to similar policies earlier undertaken by the Nazis themselves, save for the one misinformed letter-writer who thought that the music

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[80] Ibid., 24 January, 1945.
[81] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 27 October, 1945.
[82] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Aldorf, Germany, 28 September, 1946.
[83] Ibid.

of Richard Wagner was being suppressed due to the composer's posthumous affiliation with Nazism. In a similar manner, Americans were also oblivious to the parallels between their dehumanized conceptions of Nazis and the way that Nazis encouraged Germans to view other ethnicities.

It is obvious that the Americans who occupied Germany despised the Nazis and their beliefs. From the time they entered Germany, they exhibited an unparalleled level of scorn for a group they saw as morally depraved and vicious. Americans expressed their feelings in various ways, including name-calling, dehumanization, and stereotyping. In particular, dehumanization justified the harsh treatment of the Nazis during the occupation. Although a few Americans recognized that some Nazis held a greater degree of criminal responsibility than others, all Americans could comfortably lay blame for the horrors of Nazi regime squarely on Nazi shoulders.

If the Nazi Party as a whole was held responsible for the unspeakable acts perpetrated against the people of Europe during its twelve-year reign, the leadership of the Nazi Party was viewed as the ultimate source of such evil. Universally reviled, the leaders were the most vilified of all Nazis. Most were held in utter contempt by the ordinary GIs of the American occupation force. However, a certain amount of fascination with them persisted, as Americans respected the power that they had held in the past and could potentially hold again in the future. In light of this situation, it is one of the bigger surprises of this study is that more attention was not paid to the trials at Nuremberg in 1945/1946.

Despite the fact that the senior officials of the Nazi regime were no longer a threat to Germany or to the world, Americans continued to fear Nazism and they fought its

influence in the zone of occupation. Fuelled by a fear of a Nazi revival, the lack of a firm policy, and the blatant disregard for the policy that was in place, denazification was championed by a large number of Americans in Germany. From a public opinion standpoint, one of the focal points of denazification became the exclusion of Nazis from positions of power. Another facet of the process involved the destruction of all reminders of Nazism. These included both statements of Nazi ideology, including books and other propaganda materials, as well as powerful symbols of Nazi prestige, including monuments, street names, uniforms and the swastika flag. Although there were calls for the retention of such reminders, such as Hitler's tract Mein Kampf, in order to re-educate Germans about their Nazi past, Americans overwhelmingly supported the more expedient option of wiping out all vestiges of Nazism.

Within the letters columns of The Stars and Stripes, Nazism and Nazis were mentioned more as reference points than in any other manner. Nazi practices and leaders were referred to sarcastically by contributors in order to highlight perceived leniency in the treatment of Nazis as compared to other groups within Germany and Europe. The use of negative comparisons, a metaphorical approach, was a common device in which various practices and methods were refuted by comparing them to Nazism. This approach was used in two different ways in order to achieve two different results. One way involved discrediting an opposing viewpoint or practice through an association with Nazism. These comparisons usually closed off a topic to further discussion. The approach was also used to compare certain actions and policies to Nazism and this approach often yielded a constructive debate about American structures and practices. Comparing Nazi procedures to American usage of propaganda and censorship, Army racial policies or the

Litchfield incident served to cast an uneasy spotlight upon AMG and the American occupation garrison. Thus the enduring legacy of Nazism in American-occupied Germany could be used to expose the hypocrisies of the American military and the embarrassing similarities between some of its own methods and those of an utterly discredited enemy.

Chapter Four

The Legend of the "Contagious" German Woman: Analyzing American Conceptions of German Women and Men Through the Debates on Fraternization in Occupied Germany

Any examination of the American occupation of Germany from the perspective of Social History would be incomplete without an analysis of the relationship between genders. Key to this analysis is a discussion of fraternization, particularly between American men and German women. At times, the problems associated with fraternization overshadowed all other issues dealing with the occupation. Fraternization was practiced from the outset, carried on in spite of rules forbidding it, and was eventually made legal, although it continued to preoccupy Americans throughout the whole of the occupation. Involving a tension between the ideals of democratic ideology and the realities of the occupation effort, debates regarding fraternization within "The B-Bag" served to demonstrate such tensions and much more. Not only do they show some of the causes of fraternization on both sides, they also reflect a general distrust of German women on the part of men who both supported and opposed the practice, and suggest the existence of a campaign to discourage it on the part of the editors of the column. While some American men wished to salvage the sullied reputation of German women, others, fuelled by self-interest, sought to degrade it even further. In spite of all of the arguments and all the interests aligned against them, American men who supported fraternization triumphed and the practice was reluctantly permitted.

Opinions about Germans of both sexes also reveal much about the dynamics within the subsection of American society assembled in Germany and why Americans thought better about German women than men. Continuing with the theme of the rank

and file's resistance to authority, it is true that appeals for freedom eventually won out, yet the fraternizers remained controlled by the decision-makers of the American Army. However, this was not the only conflict being waged amongst different American factions. American women who resided in Germany, both career women and dependents, were also embroiled in a struggle to protect their womanhood against European women and, at the same time, to gain the same right to fraternize with the opposite sex as American men had gained. Yet at the heart of the inequality of rights between American men and women were powerful links between the issues of gender, warfare and Nazism. Thus, broad perceptions of national identity were never far away from the way that Americans perceived German men and women.

American opinions of Germans during the occupation of Germany were heavily influenced by relationships between genders. Although fraternization was the official term used by the United States Army to describe relations between all Americans and Germans during the period, for the rank and file of the American occupation forces it suggested the social interactions between American men and German women. From the beginning of the occupation, these relationships were numerous and frequent. Letters in "The B-Bag" column were filled with discussions of fraternization and all of its attendant by-products, from grappling with the Venereal Disease (VD) epidemic to the large number of German pregnancies to the issue of US GIs marrying German brides. The demographic composition of both nationalities within the American occupation zone made the fraternization inevitable. On the one side were the predominantly young, male members of the American Army, while on the other side were a majority of females who dominated society as a result of the large number of German war casualties.

Demographic determinism combined with a confluence of interests between the two groups to ensure that gender would play the central role in creating American opinions about Germans.

The rapid, yet incomplete process of deregulating fraternization moved through bureaucratic channels from June 1945 to December 1946. This process proceeded apace until the eventual granting of permission for American/German marriages. Initially, American troops were under non-fraternization orders from Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in order to protect the integrity of the Allied war effort and to ensure Allied impartiality in the administration of occupied German territory. Using the threat of fines and court-martials as deterrents, American officials set about the impossible task of keeping the two genders apart. After the war had ended, and the objective of securing victory had been attained, the first relaxation of the policy was issued on June 2, 1945. Although the official Army rationale stressed the friendly relations between American adults and German children as the reason for modification of the directive, the real reason was the stubborn persistence of German women-American servicemen romances[1]. By October 1, 1945, after another alteration of the fraternization regulations in July, non-fraternization was nearly abandoned by the American Army. The last vestiges of the policy that survived were the bans on shared accommodations with Germans and American-German intermarriage.[2] The liberalization of regulations regarding fraternization coincided with increasingly liberal views on the matter by American occupiers. By November 1945, a survey conducted by the Information and

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[1] Earl F. Ziemke, The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany: 1944-1946 (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States, 1975), 322-324.
[2] Ibid., 325.

Education Division of the Office of Military Government, United States (ICD OMGUS) concluded that four-fifths of American soldiers in Germany approved of fraternization.[3] Another survey published in 1946 produced similar results.[4] Following the trend toward removing restrictions on personal freedom, the marriage ban terminated in June 1946 and a set of guidelines for American-German nuptials, labelled the Alien Spouse Act, was published by the end of the year. Although the unique immigration regulations regarding German spouses were dropped in December 1948, with the expiry of the Alien Spouse Act, special limitations regarding overseas marriages were put in place by February 1949. Nevertheless, by the middle of 1946, only shared accommodation between Americans and Germans was still forbidden, if only because it created a potential conflict of interest role similar to the situation that prompted the authorities to prohibit American men from being married to German women and still work for the American government in Germany. Bowing to the pressures of public opinion, American authorities allowed a greater degree of freedom for Americans in Germany.

Numerous letters-to-the-editor from this period serve as evidence of an informal campaign against fraternization regulations. Led by the protestations of "lovesick" soldiers, these letters increased in frequency while strict obedience to orders diminished and the popularity of fraternization grew. Three out of four letters published in a January 1945 edition of The Stars and Stripes argued against the pro-marriage position of a previous contributor to the column, primarily because the idea challenged established

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[3] Ibid., 327
[4] Douglas Botting, In the Ruins of the Reich (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), 167.

orders.[5] However, as the occupation period progressed, the voices arguing against the ban on contact with German women became more numerous than the anti-fraternization group. Some reasoned that the ban was undemocratic,[6] or that it lacked a degree of personal choice,[7] while others sought to explain fraternization as a normal course of conduct, claiming that it was not intrinsically bad and that it had occurred in other countries throughout the course of the war.[8] Rejections of the ban based upon religious grounds were also common, and the policy was described as unchristian.[9] Some objectors to the policy suggested that many German women were free of the taint of Nazism and therefore worthy of American interaction.[10] Some letter writers even utilized biological arguments to support the persistence of fraternization, stressing the "basic drives of young men"[11] and the pent-up frustration of said men due to the lack of conventional social outlets during the war.[12] In short, a host of arguments were arrayed against the non-fraternization regulations.

All such claims aside, the overwhelming majority of pro-fraternization contributions to "The B-Bag" suggested that official policy should not stand in the way of love.[13] With self-interest at the heart of such demands, men used anecdotal evidence of

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[5] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 16 January, 1945.
[6] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 26 August, 1945; and Ibid., 9 February, 1946
[7] Ibid., 14 February, 1946; Ibid., 4 March, 1946, and The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 1 November, 1946.
[8] Ibid., 3 July, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 9 February, 1947.
[9] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 9 February 1946; Ibid., 14 March, 1946; Ibid., 25 March, 1946.
[10] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 July, 1946.
[11] Ibid., 9 June, 1946.
[12] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 March, 1946.
[13] Examples of this line of argumentation are abundant. See The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 14 March, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 18 April, 1946; Ibid., 25 June, 1946; Ibid., 5 November, 1946.

the power of love in their own relationships with German women in order to argue for a repeal of the fraternization ban. However, their passionate professions of love were more than just a strategy designed to legitimize their relationships in the eyes of conservative policy-makers. Indeed, many of these men appeared to be sincere in their love for their German girlfriends and fiancées. Some proved their devotion by expressing the lengths to which they would go in order to ensure that their relationships remained intact. One such example was the combat veteran who claimed he would remain with his German girlfriend until the marriage ban was lifted.[14] Perhaps more significantly, some men, in advocating a more liberal fraternization policy, idealized their lovers. Appealing to general American misgivings about Germans and working within the bounds of pre-existing notions, some men suggested that the girlfriends they loved were the exceptions to the negative German stereotype. A typical example of this was provided by the American soldier who argued against the marriage ban by stating that some German women were conning American men, but that his woman was "sincere and loyal."[15] In an ambivalent manner, such Americans professed deep love for their individual German companions, while simultaneously despising the German women who were in relationships for personal gain. Later writers who wrote in this fashion supported an abstract belief about the German adventuress, who sought to make it to the United States and then rid herself of the man who sponsored her, while simultaneously reassuring the reading audience that their companions were completely the opposite of this supposed

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[14] Ibid., 23 July, 1946.
[15] Ibid., 5 November, 1946.

archetype.[16] In such ways, love was cited as powerful evidence in the fight to repeal non-fraternization regulations.

While many men wrote to the letters column of The Stars and Stripes from 1944 through 1946 in order to demand a change to non-fraternization regulations, a significant minority of letters printed in "The B-Bag" put forward the opposite side of the debate. Many of the men who opposed fraternization were also the same people who maintained their dislike for the German people throughout the occupation. Some of the arguments made during the early phase of the occupation, such as the claim that German women were complicit in the actions of the men they sent to war[17] and that all German women are the enemy,[18] bear a close resemblance to the collective guilt arguments also popular during that time. A particularly hard-line anti-fraternization letter published in the column suggested that even if a German woman saluted Nazis in just one parade, she should be considered as guilty as a devout Nazi.[19] Other contributors were more subtle, but no less to the point. One particular letter-writer suggested that all his compatriots who engaged in fraternization should be forced to view the Nazi death camps as a deterrent.[20] By implicitly linking responsibility for Nazi atrocities to German women, the author of this letter advanced a guilt-based rationale for avoiding contact with the women of the occupation zone. Another familiar theme was to appeal to the memory of the fallen American comrade, with the argument that German women should be punished because

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[16] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 26 October, 1945; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 23 October, 1946.
[17] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 9 December, 1944.
[18] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 12 October, 1945.
[19] Ibid., 1 March, 1946.
[20] Ibid., 16 May, 1945.

they were a part of the German whole.[21] Nonetheless, collective guilt arguments failed to deter the practice in any way.

The ineffectiveness of such arguments did not deter letter-writers from developing other lines of argument to discourage American men from associating with German women and to advocate maintaining a high degree of control over fraternization. Some objections to fraternization were based on familiar concerns, such as the resurgence of Nazism and militarism within Germany. Some letter-writers suggested that the persistent belief in Nazi ideals on the part of German women was endangering the integrity of the occupation effort because of the influence that women had over their American love interests.[22] Others used familiar fifth column arguments to further recommend the stiffening of the fraternization regulation or to reinstate the ban on the practice.[23] Certain contributors to the column realized that fraternization, even with those German women who lacked affiliations with Nazism, still had the potential to cloud the judgment of occupation officials.[24] Yet others complained that lobbying by German girlfriends had become an outright means of attempting to influence American occupiers,, while others evoked the image of Nazi propaganda by stating that German women were unconsciously affecting American views.[25] Contributors to "The B-Bag" went so far as to place the blame on German women for such outrages as American catcalls during movie newsreels depicting the plight of displaced persons, and the results of an opinion poll that found 5%

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[21] Ibid., 7 February, 1946.
[22] Ibid., 31 January, 1946; Ibid., 14 March, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 July, 1946.
[23] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 February, 1946; Ibid., 15 March, 1946.
[24] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 June, 1946; Ibid., 20 July, 1946.
[25] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 October, 1945; Ibid., 12 February, 1946; Ibid., 18 March, 1946.

of American soldiers surveyed thought that Hitler had done a good job prior to 1939.[26] In short, these arguments were based upon a belief that German women would somehow ideologically infect American men with Nazism or at least with Nazi sympathies.

Another type of contagion that some Americans believed German women would spread was a moral one. Based on this view, critics of fraternization attacked the moral integrity of German women, stating that they contributed to the delinquency of American troops,[27] and others even used the existence of the Nazi breeding camps as ammunition.[28] Some opponents disparaged German women by evoking stereotypes of Germans as cunning liars, supplementing this with biblical ideas of women as deceivers who were trying to take advantage of American men.[29] Answering an American woman on the issue of the potential of GIs to be good spouses, one contributor to "The B-Bag" had this to say:

> After spending two or more years among people whose morals and culture have been completely bombed out of them, we become accustomed to it (immorality).[30]

Clearly German women were seen as a threat to American morality and as being responsible for the moral laxity of American men in Germany.

A third argument about contagion involved the threat of VD. A"B-Bag" letter arguing against fraternization emphasized the American woman's right to stay free of infection from her partner's contacts with German women.[31] Another early letter also

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[26] Ibid., 8 October, 1945; Ibid., 12 February, 1946.
[27] Ibid., 3 October, 1945.
[28] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 7 August, 1946.
[29] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 7 February, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 29 August, 1946.
[30] Ibid., 5 May, 1946.
[31] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 8 September, 1945.

used the threat to the American woman in arguing for a policy to protect the soldier and his "wife or future bride" from "the professional [German] prostitute and the [German] girl looking for any comfortable place to spend the night" and presumably to pass on VD.[32] While these letters implicitly linked German women to VD, others did so directly. One such letter stated that "a lot of fellows have their liquor, then comes a Fraulein, and she brings her friend VD,"[33] while another proclaimed "personnel have been told of the high rate of infected women in Europe many times. They still go and expose themselves."[34] Another writer suggested registering German women who facilitated the spread of VD with the proper authorities in order to contain the epidemic.[35] Clearly German women were earmarked by American occupiers as a threat not only to the health of American men in Europe, but also to their existing and potential love interests back in the United States.

Once it became certain that fraternization was not going to be forestalled with contagion arguments, critics of the practice began to ask that more wholesome pursuits be offered in order to prevent the spread of VD from German women to American men.[36] Other opponents of fraternization used the spectre of VD to demand that a greater variety of recreational activities be offered in order to keep men occupied.[37] From requesting better movies[38] to wanting a greater choice of physical activities[39] to demanding better

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[32] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 18 April, 1945.
[33] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 8 June, 1946.
[34] Ibid., 17 June, 1946.
[35] Ibid., 7 August, 1946.
[36] Ibid., 10 August, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 23 March, 1947.
[37] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 14 September, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 7 March, 1948.
[38] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 15 December, 1945.

access to American facilities,[40] American men argued for greater availability of those things that were important to them. Rejecting these claims, Editor's Notes responded by stating that facilities were adequate for the needs of Americans and did not require alterations.[41] Still, these requests show that the VD scare was strong enough to be used as a tool by soldiers looking to improve their own comfort in Germany.

Recognizing the inevitable legalization of intermarriage, and stymied by the lack of success that other methods had in deterring fraternization, critics of German women-GI relationships relied increasingly upon a different approach. Some sought to discourage inter-marriage by suggesting that the men who desired an official union with a German should give up a fundamental right, namely, the right to U. S. citizenship. Soldiers who opposed fraternization suggested that if the engaged men were truly in love, then they would renounce their American citizenship and live in Germany. This suggestion grew out of two issues that resulted from the topic of intermarriage, one that had consequences for the continental United States and another that had consequences for the American-occupied zone of Germany. The transportation of German brides to the United States was feared because of the possibility that it might create long-term problems for Americans at home, such as aiding a Nazi fifth column in the United States [42]or placing a strain on American public resources.[43] Those married couples who remained in Germany were also a source of concern, because they were seen as endangering the occupation effort by

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[39] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 August, 1947; Ibid., 5 December, 1947.
[40] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 17 May, 1945; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 25 April, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 3 January, 1948.
[41] Ibid.,18 August, 1947; Ibid., 7 March, 1948.
[42] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 14 February, 1947.
[43] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 30 March, 1949.

creating a group of occupiers overly-biased toward the views of their German wives. In turn, it was believed that this bias might negatively affect occupation goals.[44] In addition to these concerns, proposals regarding loss of citizenship were based on wider misogynistic beliefs about the scheming nature of German women. Some letters suggested that American men were unwitting dupes or "s-u-c-k-e-r(s)" who had fallen prey to designing German women.[45] The notion of depriving men of their citizenship also reflected a sense of betrayal about the soldiers in question, as the proposal offered the choice of ridding the United States of men so disloyal that they would marry the enemy. In the end, the idea was not adopted, nor did it succeed as a scare tactic. Caving in to overwhelming public pressure, American Military Government (AMG) made intermarriage permissible in June 1946.

The debates over fraternization were not simply about the self-interests of Americans who supported or opposed it. The letter-writers who advocated fraternization also sought important changes to the nature of American-German gender relations. A few men even argued against poor representations of German women within American circles in occupied Germany. These men resented the implication that German women were immoral if they were seen within the company of American men.[46] In fact, some of these men reversed the morality discussion to focus upon American men and their treatment of German women.[47] Entwined within these discussions of morality were notions about the VD epidemic. Some men were upset by the vilification of German women in debates

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[44] The Stars and Stripes, Souhtern Germany Edition, Aldorf, Germany, 20 July, 1946, Ibid., 22 September, 1946.
[45] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 3 November, 1945; Ibid., 14 February, 1946; Ibid., 20 February, 1946; Ibid., 29 August, 1946.
[46] Ibid., 29 December, 1945.
[47] Ibid., 26 March, 1946; Ibid., 3 April, 1946; Ibid., 21 June, 1946.

about the issue. One contributor, stating that VD was universal, asked that Americans stop demonizing Germans.[48] Outraged by such depictions, another group of men called attention to the unfair practice of examining German women for VD on the advice of American men, especially since American men carried the disease also.[49] Many people opposed any vilification of German women.

The best example of American opposition to the denigration of German femininity is exhibited by the controversy about the character "Veronika Dankeschon" in Don Shepperd's series of comic panels. The series, published in The Stars and Stripes during 1946, centred upon a gross caricature of the stereotypical German woman. Complete with a voluptuous figure, blonde hair and traditional garb, "Veronika Dankeschon" was adorned with swastikas on her skirt and hair bows, and the initials VD emblazoned on her handbag. In the panels, "Veronika" was depicted fraternizing with American GIs. Tapping into American fears regarding the resurgence of Nazism, and popular conceptions of German women as temptresses and the spreaders of contagion, the comic panel characterized German womanhood as a threat to the occupation. Although a letter defending the panel was printed in "The B-Bag," with the letter arguing that it depicted a genuine type of German woman,[50] letters of objection outnumbered letters of support three to one. One letter claimed the series was detrimental to peace with Germany,[51] while another suggested that its banning would benefit "German womanhood."[52] Representing criticisms reminiscent of those linking American men to

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[48] Ibid., 24 August, 1946
[49] Ibid., 23 May, 1946.
[50] Ibid., 3 August, 1946.
[51] Ibid., 24 July, 1946.
[52] Ibid., 22 July, 1946.

the spreading of VD, one contributor to the column suggested creating the stereotype of the debauched American soldier and naming him "Vernon Danke."[53] This example provides further evidence that a number of Americans were critical of misogynistic attitudes towards German women and it is notable that the strip was eventually cancelled.

Perhaps embodying the very fears of biased judgment that the opposition to fraternization envisioned, other American occupiers began to demand more privileges for their German companions. Arguments were made to grant German girlfriends, fiancées and spouses access to American establishments. From utilization of the post-exchange (PX)[54] to American snack bars[55] to American servicemen's clubs,[56] Americans began asking why their German companions could not use American facilities. No longer were American men contending only for their own interests, now they were arguing for the interests of their German lovers as well.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, and in much larger numbers, other Americans in Germany began to complain of German access to U. S. Army facilities. From giving German women rides in American Army vehicles[57] to allowing them into American mess halls[58] to letting them have access to an Army company's horse,[59] opponents of such privileges exhibited the same conqueror's mentality that they applied towards the German people in general. A typical example of this position can be seen in

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid., 20 October, 1946.
[55] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 23 March, 1948; Ibid., 3 December, 1948.
[56] Ibid., 18 January, 1948.
[57] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 24 December, 1945; Ibid., 26 March, 1946; Ibid., 30 April, 1946.
[58] Ibid., 26 February, 1946; Ibid., 8 November, 1946.
[59] Ibid., 16 June, 1946.

the attitude of a private who complained about German women being allowed to enter Non-Commissioned Officers' clubs, asking: "Does this mean that privates, grades 6 and 7, are to be held in a somewhat lower category than a Kraut trollop?"[60] Discrimination towards German women extended even to their consumption of American food and clothing. One American complained of German women being allowed to eat at American Red Cross Clubs, because the latter were funded through American taxes,[61] while another questioned their being provided ice cream.[62] Americans were so upset about German women wearing American uniforms that one Armed Forces nurse called it "promiscuity."[63] Pride, cost to American taxpayers, and the firm belief in a social hierarchy all played a part in American resistance to German women access to American facilities and consumer goods. However, these feelings were also governed by more simple motivations.

The German female privilege most maligned within "The B-Bag" was their access to American theatres. Many men and women wrote to the column to complain about the large number of German women who attended American films. Some Americans related the German viewing of American films to the broader effort to reorient Germans, but a respondent suggested that it actually undermined the American effort to reorient Germans through film, since the movies played in American theatres were not on the approved list of films that Germans could watch.[64] Another contributor, also in defensive mode, suggested that accommodating German women in American theatres

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[60] Ibid., 30 December, 1945.
[61] Ibid., 28 February, 1946.
[62] Ibid., 10 August, 1946.
[63] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 15 March, 1948.
[64] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 16 December, 1945.

was a way of sharing American culture and "way of life."[65] However, the majority of letters published on the matter were angry in tone, mostly due to the fact that the presence of German women lessened the availability of theatre tickets, thus denying Americans seats at the movies.[66] In a sense, nothing more than pure selfishness motivated American responses to the exercise of such privileges by German women. The broader issue of allowing German women access to American facilities served to highlight the limits of American tolerance. Although German women were given a degree of status above their male counterparts, largely based upon support for fraternization and the public prevalence of American-German relations, their interests were secondary once they came into conflict with those of the American occupiers.

Returning to a previous point, it would be misleading to suggest that occupation authorities wholeheartedly embraced popular opinion regarding the liberalization of fraternization. In fact, the editors of "The B-Bag," as tools, if not members, of the Army establishment, occasionally exercised their own editorial prerogatives to show that they supported non-fraternization. They did so through the use of a number of techniques. The most common was the Editor's Note that showed editorial support for non-fraternization. In one instance, an Editor's Note was used to counteract the effects of a letter requesting a repeal of the marriage ban by stating that the majority of responses received by the column were anti-marriage.[67] Another way the Editor's Note reinforced the authorities'

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[65] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 9 March, 1948.
[66] See The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 30 March, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 February, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 August, 1948 for examples.
[67] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 14 August, 1946.

views was by printing the official regulations beneath the requests for change.[68] By consistently replying to diverse concerns through the re-articulation of official policy, the editors of the column gave that policy an equal hearing and provided another outlet from which it could be disseminated. Although an effective regulatory tool in its own right, the Editor's Note was used sparingly in comparison with a more insidious technique for shaping public perceptions.

The most effective editorial tool was to carefully select the type of letters published and regulate the volume of opinion expressed on particular matters. Omission of information is an often overlooked, yet highly effective weapon that a newspaper editor can use to mould debate on an issue. Although difficult to prove, controlling content by omitting, exaggerating or downplaying information under the guise of the editorial decision-making process is part of the daily routine of every newspaper editor. The manipulation of content reveals the biases of the editors and can be seen as more important than the placement of any Editor's Note or comic panel within a column. In the case of the fraternization debate, the editors of "The B-Bag" appear guilty of creating, at the very least, a distorted view of American opinions by printing an overrepresentation of letters opposing fraternization. Considering the fact that eight of ten young soldiers dated German women[69] and that eighty percent of all GIs supported the practice in late 1945, there was a definite overrepresentation of anti-fraternization letters printed in the column.

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[68] Ibid., 14 November, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 5 February, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 3 April, 1948.
[69] Harold Zink, The United States in Germany: 1944-1955 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1957), 132.

Far more than twenty percent of the letters printed regarding the issue were in favour of non-fraternization.

The fact that some letter writers had a vague idea that such a misrepresentation was taking place lends more credence to the theory. In May 1946, one pro-fraternization contributor noted the dearth of letters on the subject and surmised that censorship may have had a role in the shortfall. Perhaps recognizing the subliminal intentions of the editors, the letter-writer lamented that the publication of lone requests to repeal the ban would not influence decision-makers and that the only way to get the message across was to complain en masse.[70] A similar letter suggesting a new, anti-marriage policy on the part of the editors was printed in October 1946. It was followed by a terse Editor's Note dismissing the claim and a pro-marriage letter was placed immediately afterward in order to suggest the lack of any such bias.[71] While censorship is difficult to prove, some vocal readers of the paper were able to discern a trend in the column that contradicted their own generally pro-fraternization experience. Of course it is possible that opponents of fraternization were more inclined to submit correspondence to "The B-Bag," but it is more likely that the editorial staff of the column took the opportunity to include letters within the column that were compatible with the initial anti-fraternization policy.

Further analysis of the liberalization of German-American relationships reveals that there was a limit to the seemingly freedom-oriented reforms of fraternization policy. In fact, this liberalization was part of a conflict between the rank and file of the occupation garrison and its commanders. This process allowed the powers-that-be to

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[70] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdof, Germany, 12 May, 1946.
[71] Ibid., 23 October, 1946.

retain a great deal of leverage over the regular troops of the occupation garrison. In examining the strict regulations regarding American male-German female marriages that were implemented in December 1946 and lasted until December 1948, it is clear that the American Army retained ultimate control over if, when and how a marriage between an American and German could take place. Under the terms of United States Forces, European Theatre (USFET) Circular 181 (1946), an application for marriage and, if necessary, a military exit permit for the German had to be submitted by the couple six to three months prior to the American's permanent leave from the European Theatre or termination of employment by American forces. For those wanting to stay in Germany only, the application process involved supplying official information about the German fiancé(e)'s physical health (providing a "certificate of freedom from communicable disease...a serological test for syphilis and a chest x-ray when indicated"), desire to marry and "recommendations of chaplain after interview with" both parties. The process was even more complicated when the couple wished to enter the United States, presumably in order to protect the country from moral and ideological threats to American values. When applying for a military exit permit, further information had to be provided from the German police to prove the moral and criminal innocence of fiancé(e), and from the German denazification courts to prove lack of Nazi affiliations. Finally, if approved, the marriage could take place prior to the two parties leaving Europe, but only if it was performed under German civil law, and only within one month prior to departure from Germany. [72] Under these stringent regulations, authority over the ultimate manifestation of American-German romantic relationships was retained by the American

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[72] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 6 June, 1947.

command. Thus, although the adoption of these new regulations conceded the freedom for an American to marry a German, in reality the American Army retained extensive control over the rank and file.

The exertion of this control was not simply undertaken for the sake of maintaining power. The regulations regarding American-German marriages were introduced for a number of pragmatic reasons. Following the 1948 repeal of Public Law 271 (The Alien Spouse Act), which was encompassed within the rules of USFET Circular 181, Americans were free to marry Germans without the approval of the American Army, although German spouses now had to obtain entrance into the United States through the State Department and under the stipulations of American immigration legislation. Thus, although the regulations had clearly changed by early 1949, much of the intent behind the rules governing inter-marriages remained essentially the same throughout the period from December 1946 to September 1949. An Editor's Note from an early 1949 edition of "The B-Bag" explains the underlying logic behind the strict pre-conditions that a German bride was required to meet in order to gain permission to immigrate to the United States. Much of the logic regarding the American immigration rules for foreign spouses (circa 1924) can be extrapolated to apply to the Alien Spouse Act as well. Even though the American/German couple could marry without permission of the U.S. Army, the editor mentions a series of paternalistic Army, Air Force and European Command (EUCOM) regulations which set out an officially approved set of instructions that would supposedly increase the likelihood of a German gaining entry into the United States and "would

provide better assurance of a successful marriage."[73] More noteworthy yet, the editors also suggested that many of the stipulations behind the Alien Spouse Act were still being applied. There were regulations in place, they said, to guarantee that a spouse was of "a satisfactory standard of health... [had] freedom from undesirable affiliations," and was financially supported.[74] Clearly the overriding rationale behind these regulations was the protection of the interests of the American public.

The debate on fraternization also offers some insights into the nature of the relations between American men and German women. The argument that these relationships were inevitable due to the demographic composition of each group is useful, yet it also fails to grasp the dynamics between the participants in these relationships. Unfortunately, because "The B-Bag" only published letters from Americans, the perspective of the German woman is distorted, based upon second-hand American inquiries and observations into German motives for fraternizing. However, these one-sided glimpses into the dynamics between German men and women are important. As mentioned above, some of these relationships involved genuine love between the partners, and many resulted in happy marriages. Still other relationships, most likely the majority, involved a different kind of mutual exchange between the two parties.[75]

Experiencing desperate conditions attributable to the impact of the war, German women did whatever they could to survive. With food a prominent concern of Germans during the occupation, many women gardened small plots of land, foraged, and even

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[73] Ibid., 30 March, 1949.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Franklin Davis describes the nature of these relationships in, Franklin M. Davis, Jr., Come as a Conqueror: The United States Army's Occupation of Germany, 1945-1949, (New York: MacMillan Co., 1967), 144-146.

begged for food in order to stave of the effects of starvation for themselves and their families. An even greater source of food and other material goods came from the American soldiers who occupied Germany. Provided with large shares of rations, including ample amounts of tobacco, cigarettes, -- the unofficial currency of the American zone until the financial reform of 1948 -- and candy, American men were ready and willing to part with their goods in exchange for something from German women. A jilted American lover complained of this fact when he stated that he was upset that his German girlfriend left him after he had given her his candy rations.[76] On top of access to the stores of goods that American men had accumulated, German girlfriends were allowed access to American mess halls, snack bars, social clubs and theatres, all of which offered either light refreshments or full meals. Although only explicitly stated by one group of letter-writers,[77] critics chagrined by German women's access to these facilities may have also made the connection between German motives and the material realities of many of these relationships. Certainly such things contributed to the development of the German adventuress stereotype, which reinforced notions of German women as users of American men. In fact, some American men were aware of the aspirations of German women, yet at the same time they chose to ignore them. In an act of defiance against those who warned about the ulterior motives of German women, one

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[76] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 22 May, 1946.

[77] A petition submitted by 82 soldiers to "The B-Bag" complained of missing food from a Frankfurt snack bar, suggesting that it was the work of "the banhof (sic) type [of German woman] who pick up GIs just to go to the snack bar to obtain food." The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 20 July, 1948.

soldier claimed "'tis such fun being putty in their hands, so much more interesting than listening to people with putty in their heads."[78]

While the provision of material goods to German women was the key aspect of the first half of the exchange, the second half involved sexual contact. In the beginning, the average American soldier endured the horrors of war and innumerable hours of separation from female company that the war entailed. Once entering and occupying the towns of Germany, these men encountered a German female public that was both friendly and accommodating. Many men jumped at the chance to engage in relations of any sort with members of the other gender. The sexual nature of such relations was sustained throughout, as evidenced by the persistent VD epidemic and the tens of thousands of German-American children born out of wedlock. One critic of these hedonistic practices appealed for Americans to "get on the ball and show the Krauts that 'wine, women and song' is not the theme of the American way of life."[79] More specifically, the sexual aspect of relations between Americans and Germans was such common knowledge that American men created terms to describe different parts of the process. Besides the accepted use of the terms "frat" and "fratting," which were virtually synonymous with sexual intercourse, contributors to "The B-Bag" came up with their own vernacular to describe the experience. One letter offered the term "Frauleinization," which meant "fraternization with a definite purpose," implying sexual relations.[80] Another letter introduced the term "occupational frustration," which referred to the general dissatisfaction that GIs felt about conditions in Germany. According to the Army officer

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[78] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 October, 1946.
[79] Ibid., 4 July, 1946.
[80] Ibid., 25 August, 1945.

who wrote this letter, the main factor behind such dissatisfaction was the sexual frustration of heterosexual men who abstained from intimate relations with German women.[81]

Although certainly integral to the exchange between Germans and Americans, sexual intimacy was not the only thing that Americans pursued. Love was also on the minds of American men, as depicted in the numerous letters to "The B-Bag" that professed love for a German woman as a way of arguing for the liberalization of fraternization rules. On a less intense level, mere companionship also seemed to drive Americans into the arms of Germans, and likely vice versa. Occupied Germany, with its language, culture and traditions all foreign to the average American occupier, could often be a lonely and dull place, especially after the excitement of the war. In spite of the fact that there was a large contingent of Americans occupying Germany, many were not content to associate exclusively with members of the same gender. These points were succinctly articulated by one GI who suggested that "boredom, loneliness and liquor demand companionship and GI's won't do."[82] To combat loneliness and avoid having to 'settle' for German women, some men asked that American fiancées or members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) be provided for the purpose of companionship.[83] Perhaps the best evidence of the fact that German women were utilized by some American men to provide much needed companionship comes from the letter written by an American occupier who requested a dog. Presumably out of a longing for any kind of companionship, this particular contributor asked that he be furnished with 'man's best

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[81] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 26 Januray, 1947.
[82] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 9 October, 1946.
[83] Ibid., 12 May, 1946; Ibid., 15 May, 1946.

friend,' because, as he claimed, he was not interested in any German woman "in particular."[84]

The motives behind the interactions between German men and American women were secondary to critics of fraternization. To some occupiers, in particular, American women, fraternization came to symbolize an attack on American womanhood. Indeed, the sight of thousands of American men engaging in intimate relations with German women in particular, and European women in general, was perceived as an affront to American women. Outnumbered by their foreign counterparts, these women feared that many American men were becoming used to the different attitudes and customs that European women brought to their relations with American men. Many women belonging to the WAC, as well as the medical professionals who supported American troops during the war and the occupation of Germany, abhorred the formation of these relationships. Throughout the war and into the occupation period, American women working alongside American GIs watched soldiers fraternize with European women in Britain, France, Italy, Austria and Germany. Their outrage over what they saw as the blatant and vulgar relations between these groups increased further after the first group of Armed Forces dependents arrived in Germany in early April 1946. While they were only a small minority of the Americans who occupied Germany during the period of AMG,[85] the 30,000 American dependents were mainly female and were extremely vocal. Both American career women and housewives saw themselves as the defenders of New World, American womanhood from a siege of Old World, European femininity.

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[84] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 4 February, 1947

[85] Franklin M. Davis, Jr. Come as a Conqueror: The United States Army's Occupation of Germany, 1945-1949 (New York: MacMillan Co., 1967), 190.

American women's feelings of insecurity were compounded by the debate about the merits of American and European women publicized in "The B-Bag." Specifically, some American men ranked European women as more desirable than their American counterparts for a variety of reasons. The arguments they put forth generally praised the subservient ways of European women while damning supposedly opinionated American women. As one soldier proclaimed, enlisted men "prefer Fraulein-they cooperate,"[86] an allusion to their eagerness to please American men in a variety of ways. Another private suggested that foreign brides were better than "gabblesome" American wives because they were not nearly as talkative.[87] One man even used documented evidence from the German newspaper Neue Zeitung to support his claims that European women were superior. He suggested that while European women adhered to traditional female roles, American women abandoned these roles, supposedly creating instability within marriages and driving up divorce rates as a result.[88] Such opinions were obviously fuelled by a backlash to the perceived growth of female autonomy within the United States prior to and during the war years.

Opponents of fraternization utilized comparisons of the relative strengths and weaknesses of European and American women to prove the superiority of the latter. Playing upon the weaknesses of the traditional woman motif, one American male claimed that European women lacked the independence necessary to be a soldier's wife.[89] Another letter-writer claimed that American women were more efficient and moral than

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[86] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 August, 1945.
[87] Ibid., 22 February, 1946.
[88] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 9 October, 1947.
[89] Ibid., 21 March, 1948.

German women.[90] Still another implied that German womanhood, infected with VD, were impure compared to American women, who were free of contagion.[91]

Other ways were also used by American women to disprove the myth of the superior European woman. A WAC sergeant played upon collective guilt sentiment and the abstract notion of German women as harbouring ulterior motives to argue for American superiority. She reminded readers of Nazi atrocities, implying the responsibility of all Germans, and claimed that German love interests were only in relationships with Americans for material gain.[92] Another highlighted the relationship between demography and American-German relationships, claiming the only reason German women seemed alluring was due to the fact that American women were nearly non-existent in the European Theatre.[93] Reflecting the underlying xenophobia of many of those who argued against fraternization, one American wife stated that the German women were "shack jobs" whose relations with American men tarnished the reputation of the occupiers and of American womanhood.[94] Thus American women attacked ideas about the superiority of European/German women with gusto.

The fraternization issue also served as a mirror into conflicts between segments of American society in Germany. Perhaps reflecting the image of The Stars and Stripes as the enlisted man's newspaper, conflicts between the rank and file and officers were reflected in gripes about fraternization. Questioning their inferior status, members of the rank and file complained that officers' German lovers were given access to American

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[90] Ibid., 26 October, 1947.
[91] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 18 December, 1945.
[92] Ibid., 29 October, 1946.
[93] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 26 October, 1947.
[94] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 7 June, 1946.

facilities ahead of them or at their expense. Objections from this group about their restricted access to officers' clubs or lack of seating at American cinemas were frequent.[95] Others complained of the discrepancy between the rules by which each group had to abide. Some GIs were upset that their German girlfriends were denied access to movie theatres, while officers were allowed to have their German girlfriends accompany them.[96] Others questioned why officers were allowed to entertain German women in their quarters while common GIs were not supposed to be seen in public with them.[97] These complaints highlight the resentment the average GI harboured toward the superior privileges and status accorded to members of the officer corps.

The benefits of higher rank also bore a cost. On the other side of the debate, officers felt that the responsibility of their rank came at a price to their personal freedom. Evidence suggests that everybody expected officers to serve as role models for their subordinates.[98] One officer argued for a standard set of regulations, claiming that the existing rules were unfair because they prohibited the dating of indigenous women by officers while women were often seen with non-officers.[99] Within this context, some officers were jealous of enlisted men, in that the latter were unburdened with the responsibility of being a role model. Thus the root of the problems between officers and the rank and file lay in jealousy over the freedoms and privileges that each group believed the other enjoyed.

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[95] Ibid., 11 September, 1945; Ibid., 23 September, 1945; Ibid., 4 October, 1945; Ibid., 12 October, 1945; Ibid., 30 December, 1945.
[96] Ibid., 23 September, 1945.
[97] Ibid., 1 June, 1946.
[98] Ibid.; Ibid., 2 June, 1946.
[99] Ibid., 30 September, 1946.

Another major conflict involved American men and women. Both were annoyed by the way each group treated and viewed the other. Some enlisted men justified their relationships with German women by stating that members of the WAC, or "wacs" as they were called, only dated officers.[100] In response to such claims, one "wac" bristled at the implication that she and her countrywomen were in Germany solely to protect American soldiers from the temptation of fraternization.[101] Another suggested that American men preferred German women because they did not know how to treat real (read: American) ladies properly.[102] Similar to American men, single American women in the European Theatre also claimed that they too suffered from a lack of dating choices, blaming their woes on the more popular foreign women.[103] One nurse on duty in Germany complained that American policy prohibited American servicemen from dating female American nurses but not German members of the opposite sex, thereby relegating nurses to a social status lower than that of German women.[104] In response to such claims, an American sergeant fired back, contending that American women would not even approach him, while others claimed that American women refused to date GIs.[105] A genuine ambivalence and an unwillingness to understand each other's positions contributed to a tension between American men and women in Germany.

The underlying gender conflict amongst American occupiers was compounded by the double standard in attitudes regarding fraternization. Although relations between American men and German women were seen as risky and dangerous in the eyes of some

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[100] Ibid., 20 August, 1945; Ibid., 2 July, 1946.
[101] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 9 December , 1944.
[102] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 2 September, 1945.
[103] Ibid., 10 June, 1946.
[104] Ibid., 6 November, 1945.
[105] Ibid., 20 June, 1946; Ibid., 2 July, 1946.

critics, the majority of the occupiers eventually condoned the practice. The same cannot be said for relations between German men and American women. During the last months of the war, American women were harshly criticized in "The B-Bag" for the hospitality they provided for German POWs held captive in the United States. Letters objecting to such friendly treatment employed much of the same rhetoric used to disparage the American male-German female type of fraternization. References to Nazi ideological contagion, a German/Nazi fifth column, the memory of dead American soldiers and Nazi war crimes were all used to condemn such activity.[106] Opposition to each type of fraternization differed in the way that the fraternizers were branded and the suggestions made to deal with those who engaged in such activities. Whereas American men were considered immoral for their actions, American women were labelled "town ____ [whores],"[107] even if evidence of sexual relations between American women and German men was unavailable. While the suggested punishment and future deterrent for American men was to visit a Nazi concentration camp, a proposed way of dealing with American women involved public shaming. The humiliation recommended for these women involved having their hair shorn, followed by being paraded naked in public.[108] Perhaps related to conventional notions of women as the upholders of morality, such epithets and suggested punishments reflect a disappointment in the way some women behaved and also an unconscious attempt to reinforce convention.

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[106] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 16 March, 1945; Ibid., 28 March, 1945; Ibid., 2 April, 1945.
[107] Ibid., 5 April, 1945.
[108] Ibid., 28 March, 1945.

Meanwhile, in Germany, American women became targets of an innate double standard regarding fraternization with Germans. This is illustrated in letters like the one written by an American mail censor in August 1945. Although she probably read similar letters written by American men frequently, this female censor objected to a "wac's" letter home detailing her love for a former SS officer. The contributor to "The B-Bag" then claims that the letter in question was not mailed, and asks the readers of the column rhetorically if they "get what [she] means?"[109] Such attitudes manifested themselves in the social censure of relationships between German men and American women. It is not uncommon to read accounts by American women telling of excessive harassment of such mixed couples. One such story chronicled the hounding that a female American Red Cross employee and male European aid worker endured simply because the man appeared to be German.[110] Within this context, the freedom of American women was constrained by the pressure placed upon them by American troops in Germany.

While women's freedom of action may have been constrained, they resisted the attempt to control them by presenting their own ideas on the issue. Recognizing hypocritical types of attitudes and behaviour, some American women in Germany called attention to the double standard by directly criticizing its implicit sexism.[111] Others recognized this inequality and used the double standard to their advantage.[112] For instance, one contributor to the column, highlighting the hypocrisy of public opinion on the matter, mockingly suggested that German men should be allowed into the United

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[109] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 21 August, 1945.
[110] Ibid., 1 September, 1946.
[111] Ibid., 7 August, 1945; Ibid., 26 May, 1946.
[112] Ibid., 30 August, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 17 January, 1947.

States to marry American women.[113] Manipulating the double standard to suit their own needs shows that American women were not merely victims of an unfair standard of behaviour.

What ultimately underlay the double standard was the implicit association between Nazism, warfare and German masculinity. Although a persistent level of hatred for German women in the abstract was a common feeling among Americans during the occupation, relations between these women and American men were generally tolerated if not completely accepted. The same cannot be said for relations between American women and German men. Even more powerful than the fear of contagion from the German female was a fear of contagion from the German male. In spite of the fact that there were Americans who clung to the idea of collective guilt for Nazi crimes, guilt was never distributed evenly. Although the Nazis had made a half-hearted attempt to involve women in the total war effort, the fact that men orchestrated and directly carried the vast majority of Nazi crimes was not lost on the American people. The aforementioned letter about a former SS officer illustrates this point, as Americans considered German men a more obvious target of anger. This was compounded by two other facts: the gendered, male nature of warfare at the time, and the idea of the mythical Aryan male as the symbol of Nazi society. The link between masculinity and Nazism was implicit. Further complicating matters was a prevailing belief in the strength of the Wehrmacht, which was fanned by the German Army's successes prior to its defeat in the war and which was a possible source of American feelings of inadequacy. All of these factors gave rise to a "zero tolerance" attitude about relations between American women and German men

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[113] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 30 August, 1946.

mainly in order to protect Americans from the bearers of Nazi and German militaristic values. It is also why it is not surprising to find comments like those in an Editor's Note that suggested banning German girlfriends from shopping in the PX and other American stores. As the argument went, letting such less dangerous German women use the stores was perhaps the first step on a slippery slope that would eventually lead to the concession of real liberties for German men. [114] Implicit in this particular train of thought was a belief that once the real enemy, the German male, gained access to American facilities; they would pose a direct threat to American interests and values.

Using gender to analyze the occupation of Germany reveals a great deal about the occupiers and their German subjects. The persistence of the rank and file in their drive to liberalize relations between American men and German women shows the power of stubborn resistance even in the face of one of the most powerful and conservative organizations in the world. The few American voices aligned in opposition to the bigotry and degradation directed at German women also show that, for some, upholding the beliefs of the occupation superceded self-interested motives. The continued opposition to these trends by a steadfast minority also shows the power of many ethnic and sexist ideas and stereotypes, such as the supposed threat by German women to American morality, ideology and physical health. The dichotomy of the individual German woman as good versus the whole of German womanhood as bad was adhered to even by American male supporters of fraternization and shows how some American men were so influenced by prejudice that their attitudes became extremely ambivalent. And finally there is evidence

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[114] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 3 December, 1948.

that the editors of "The B-Bag" represented a distorted view of the fraternization debate in general, particularly by amplifying the voice of opposition to fraternization and emphasizing one side of the debate at the expense of the other.

Looking at American opinions of German motives, coupled with confessions about their own intentions, reveals that reciprocity was the key to many relationships between American men and German women. Although love and companionship were important factors in some relationships, it appears that the exchange of sexual intimacy for material goods may have been the overriding factor in many more. The material hardships of German women combined with the sexual deprivation of American men created the precondition for these convenient couplings.

The debates about fraternization also offer insights into the conflicts between different American social and gender groups. Whether it was the rule-making authorities versus the rank and file, the officers versus the enlisted men, or men versus women, conflict helped shape how these groups interacted and how they viewed one another. In these conflicts, each subordinated group managed to exercise a sense of resistance in different ways. Whether it was the rank and file flouting the rules regarding fraternization, enlisted men questioning officers' privileges, or women criticizing the comparative quality of European womanhood and the fraternization double standard, every disadvantaged group managed to voice its disapproval of the status quo.

While gender is the main concern of this chapter, it may seem odd that German men were discussed very little. The few words that were written about them in "The B-Bag" column, using gender as a primary or secondary means of identity, create a sense that relations between German men and American women were strictly frowned upon.

Ultimately, the reason that fraternization with German women was more acceptable than fraternization with German men had to do with the link between masculinity and the way in which this link served to discredit German men.

Ironically, beliefs about German men may have also contributed to the prevalence of hatred and sexism towards German women. After all, German men were a known enemy whom Americans had fought on the field of battle and who had perpetrated unspeakable crimes in the name of Nazism. Americans had seen firsthand what they were capable of and had deemed them unworthy of their trust. Unfortunately, German women were a largely unknown quantity, having supported the war effort at home, but having had very little contact with Americans prior to the invasion of Germany. Fuelled by traditional sexist and xenophobic attitudes about women and the German people in general, Americans were weary of these mysterious creatures. In a poignant example of the fear of the unknown, Americans lashed out at German women, concerned about the potential impact they could wield on the occupation and, more importantly, on American society in general.

Chapter Five

The Innocent German Child:

How German Youth Grew to be Loved by Their American Occupiers

German children were arguably the best treated of all the segments of the German population during the American occupation of Germany. They were the beneficiaries of a greater amount of charity and aid than any other group within Germany. The youth of Germany were held in such high regard that, by 1947, a number of American occupiers were seeking to adopt German children and bring them back to the United States. The existence of such actions and attitudes only two years after one of the bitterest conflicts in history begs the question: Why?

In endeavouring to respond to such an inquiry, it is important to analyze the motivations of Americans living and working in Germany. Such motivations can best be gleaned through the opinions they constantly gave about German youths. As is the case with most charity efforts, sympathy played a major role in the positive treatment of German youngsters. However, more than sympathy led to the generous treatment that German children received at the hands of their American "conquerors." By looking critically at the topics of democratization, collective guilt, and nationality, we can achieve a greater understanding of why the youth of the American zone of occupation were treated the way that they were.

Initial American views about German youth were quite unfavourable. In the opinion of a number of vocal American occupiers, German children were unworthy and incapable of both reorientation and re-education. The doctrine of collective guilt influenced these opinions greatly. In the eyes of some members of the American Armed Forces, there were few distinctions to be made between German adults and children.

Some of these people hoped that German children would be made to atone for the fact that their "parents killed 15 million" people. [1] German children were expected to pay for the sins of their fathers either through the denial of American aid, or by Americans servicing the interests of more worthy candidates first, like children who were either displaced persons or Allied nationals.[2]

The actions of some German children also contributed to these negative opinions. Although knowledge that the youth of Germany were introduced to Nazi beliefs at an early age through such organizations as the Hitler Youth was certainly commonplace, it was the actions of such children that provoked the most outrage from Americans in Germany. Throughout the early part of the occupation, Americans who believed in the innate hatefulness of German children were partly validated in their opinions by the efforts of such youth to protect their nation from the advancing armies of the Allies. Specifically, some Americans viewed the release of 9-12 year-old German snipers in Aachen as reprehensible, as one letter-writer argued that these children were as guilty for their actions as "16 and 17 year-old soldiers."[3] Furthermore, the commutation of a 16 year-old's death sentence for killing American soldiers was also decried as being too lenient.[4] Some viewed relations with all German youth as dangerous. For example, one contributor complained that children received charity from American soldiers and then proceeded to shoot them in the back.[5] In these instances, the age of German youth was discounted as a factor in calculating responsibility for their actions. They were either

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[1] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 5 January, 1946.
[2] Ibid.; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 December,1948.
[3] The Stars and Stripes, London Edition, London, England, 7 November, 1944.
[4] Ibid., 15 February, 1945.
[5] Ibid., 19 January, 1945.

labelled Nazis or were linked to Nazism through their affiliation with the "Hitler Youth."[6] The editors of "The Mail Bag" column reinforced these beliefs through the use of a comic panel in mid-1945. Rearticulating the view of the German child as dangerous and militaristic, the panel depicted a German youth, in a football uniform, with a rifle pointed at his opponent and a caption reading, "Ach! I'll stop him this time."[7] By negating the effects of an accompanying letter that advocated using sports to stem the tide of juvenile delinquency in Germany, the panel served to reinforce the belief that all Germans were violent and determined to exact revenge. All told, the actions of some young Germans provided the impetus for the initial level of American resentment towards German youth. This resentment was then compounded by the tendency of some Americans, including the editors of the letters columns in The Stars and Stripes, to extrapolate from these isolated incidents in order to create the stereotype of a "nazified" German youth.

As time progressed, these negative attitudes became less common to the point where they nearly disappeared.[8] Influenced once again by personal observations and by interactions with German children, Americans in Germany warmed to German youth. Collective guilt arguments gave way to a sombre belief in the victimization of the young at the hands of their Nazi elders. Much like the attitudes of Americans during the occupation of the Rhineland after World War I, the post-World War II American

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[6] Ibid., 15 February, 1945; Ibid., 7 November, 1944.
[7] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 13 September, 1945.
[8] However, they never entirely disappeared. The image of the Hitler Youth devoted to the rebirth of a strong Germany was resurrected in December 1948, after a several years absence, by a "B-Bag" contributor who quoted a Time magazine article about the continued existence of such youngsters. See The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 December, 1948.

occupiers were particularly struck by German depravation and hardship.[9] What they saw were images of "ragged waifs... [who were] innocent victims of Germany."[10] The stereotype of the blonde, healthy member of the Hitler Youth was transformed into the image of the "poor, needy, and undernourished orphan."[11] As opinions of German youth shifted from partners of the Nazi regime to victims of the Third Reich, American affinity for children grew. Implicit in these notions of victimization were varying degrees of suffering. In the minds of Americans, the more disadvantaged children appeared the more worthy of pity and aid they were. Thus charitable efforts towards blind German children were viewed as exceptional from other attempts to help more able children.[12] So compelling was the level of sympathy towards German children that certain Americans defended German youth while they criticized the actions of their own peers. By suggesting that taunting German children with cigarette butts or throwing rocks at them were demeaning and potentially dangerous acts, some Americans illustrated the power that the image of the vulnerable German child potentially had.[13] Most Americans recognized the vulnerability of German youth and felt profound sympathy for them.

These sympathetic feelings translated into a whole host of actions. From the first day the Americans set foot on German soil, they took pity on the German children deprived as a result of the war and they gave them portions of their rations, with chewing gum and candy most often being provided. As the food shortage worsened during the

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[9] See Alfred Corenbise's discussion of charitable American attitudes towards Germans during the hyperinflation crisis of 1922-1923. Alfred Cornebise, The Amaroc News (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1981), 188.

[10] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 7 April , 1947 .

[11] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 1 October, 1947.

[12] Ibid., 23 November, 1947.

[13] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 7 October, 1946; Ibid., 29 October, 1945.

latter months of 1945 and into 1946, Americans began to provide more than just informal help to German children and their families. The idea of sending aid parcels provided by Americans to individual Germans and their families, such as CARE packages, triggered a widespread response by Americans in Germany. "The B-Bag" reflected a growth in support for these initiatives, as a number of letters requested information on the availability of such programs and suggested ways to combat the problem which relied specifically on American sacrifice and charity.[14] Individual Americans did not stand idly by and let the youth of Germany (and their families) starve to death.

In spite of the American aid campaign designed to help feed the hungry people of Germany, some Americans believed that the population of Germany did not have it as bad as they led others to believe. Some drew upon familiar arguments, such as those who claimed that the German people were manipulating gullible American "suckers." At the height of the German food shortage in the winter of 1945-1946, one letter writer claimed that the "Germans were not starving... [they] remain one of the best fed peoples in Europe... it seems we are again falling for a clever German line."[15] Another contributor scoffed at the idea that Germans were suffering as a result of a lack of food. Replying in a sarcastic tone to a story that reported the average German male had lost twenty pounds as a result of deprivation, an American major claimed that he had lost thirty pounds during

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[14] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 February, 1947; Ibid., 7 April, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 20 November, 1947; Ibid., 23 December, 1947; Ibid., 30 January, 1948; Ibid., 15 February, 1948; Ibid., 22 July, 1948.
[15] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 25 February, 1946.

his stay in Germany and that he had never had it so good.[16] One letter writer questioned the veracity of a German on trial for the murder of an American-owned dog. While the defendant's assertion that he had killed the animal to feed his starving mother was accepted by American authorities, the letter-writer disputed this interpretation of events, claiming that it must have been hatred for Americans that triggered such actions.[17] Thus, whether it was Germans in general or individual Germans in particular, some Americans retained a level of doubt when it came to believing German stories of hardship and deprivation.

In the face of persistent scepticism about the real need for charity in Germany, American aid continued unabated. The most striking examples of this American altruism came when the American occupiers celebrated their Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. While the Americans did help all Germans, as evidenced by the story of a German woman who thanked a couple of anonymous American soldiers for giving her a briefcase at Christmas in 1946,[18] it was German youth who were most in thoughts of gift-givers and aid donors. Reminiscent of American charity drives for German children during the occupation of the Rhineland after World War I,[19] Americans offered both their time and their resources to aid German children during the holiday season. From the letter-writer who asked that his unused refreshment coupons be used for a children's Christmas party in Garmisch to the contributor who suggested that bored American dependents spend their free holiday time providing for German children to the American

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[16] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 2 May, 1947.
[17] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 24 October, 1946.
[18] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 January, 1947.
[19] Alfred Cornebise, The Amaroc News (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1981), 45-49.

who endorsed a project launched in Bremen to match 100,000 German children with a toy and an article of clothing, both small and large-scale efforts were undertaken to make the lives of German children more pleasant during the holiday season.[20] These ideas were reinforced by the charitable spirit of the holidays, embodied in such comments as "the best joy of all is giving" and "Christmas...a time for rejoicing and good will toward men."[21] Most importantly, the stereotype of the helpless child loomed large in American thoughts. Younger German children were seen as particularly needy, based on the idea that "older German children can take care of themselves,"[22] a notion that once again suggests that not all German youth were viewed as equal. Although motivated by the spirit of the season, Americans were guided by a sense that the more helpless a German was, the more worthy of charity he/she was.

It is interesting to note that the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Airlift, two of the most often cited examples of American aid in the historical literature, were dealt with sparingly by the contributors to "The B-Bag." Although not part of the individual charity efforts discussed here, they were crucially important aspects of the overall aid effort by the Americans to keep Germans fed, clothed and employed. In fact, only three letters were printed about either effort, one that inquired about how the Marshall Plan benefited Germans directly, another that asked whether an American automobile owner would receive compensation for not being able to use his vehicle during the blockade, and the

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[20] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 10 November, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 28 November, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 October, 1947.
[21] Ibid., 3 November, 1948; Ibid., 18 October, 1947.
[22] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 10 November, 1946.

third that saw the airlift as a symbol of the American commitment to peace.[23] The lack of a relevant dialogue between the readers of The Stars and Stripes may be explained due to several factors. First of all, both efforts were carried on at a time when "The B-Bag" appearing at a decreasing frequency in The Stars and Stripes. A daily column in its heyday, "The B-Bag" was not printed for three ten day periods from May to July 1948, as the Marshall Plan and Airlift supplies began to arrive, and it never regained its previous frequency of publication thereafter. This increasing reluctance to print the column can perhaps be attributed to a general apathy that overcame Americans in Germany during this time. This theory may help to explain the apparent disinterest in these two monumental efforts to aid the German people.

The flaw in this argument lies in the fact that the column continued to be published at all. Indeed, Americans were still interested in complaining about their plight in Germany and in demanding better conditions. A more probable explanation for the lack of any significant numbers of letters about either aid effort is that there was an unspoken consensus on these issues. One opinion poll suggested that on September 15, 1948, more than eighty percent of the American public approved of the Airlift and thought Germans worthy of such efforts.[24] Having already established the occupiers' belief in the notion of democratization, and given that the Marshall Plan and the Airlift became the ultimate manifestations of American support for a German democracy, it may not be such a leap to conclude that Americans in Germany were wholeheartedly supportive of these initiatives.

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[23] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 23 July, 1948; Ibid., 20 September, 1948; Ibid., 28 April, 1949.
[24] Mildred Strrunk, ed., "The Quarter's Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1949 (12), 764.

The Marshall Plan and Berlin Airlift aside, American motivations behind providing food and goods for German youth also revolved around the usual American pursuit of self-interest. Certainly sympathy played a part in the way in which Americans in Germany treated native children, as the attitudes around holiday charity suggest. However, sympathetic appeals for aid were supplemented by some less than altruistic American goals. In particular, Americans were worried about the danger that deprivation posed to the members of the occupation garrison. Some worried about how begging German youth threatened the security of an OMGUS installation in Berlin, while others in Munich alerted their colleagues to the existence of a German youth nicknamed the "jitterbug," who stole from Americans.[25] Others saw a larger picture, recognizing the level of instability that "starvation, unrest and epidemic diseases" could create.[26] Thus, German destitution was considered bad for the occupation because of the potential damage it could have caused for American occupiers and their goals in Germany.

More interestingly, some Americans believed that material need posed a barrier to planting the seeds of democracy in German youth. In a way, a vicious circle was created connecting the delinquent acts of German youth to their material needs and to the belief that Americans could reshape German children in their own democratic image. Ideas about the innocence of youth gave way to pragmatic arguments for the re-education of this segment of the German population. German children were viewed as most worthy of re-education efforts partly due to their political immaturity and consequent malleability.

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[25] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine- Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 23 January, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 22 April, 1948.
[26] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 12 November, 1945.

The idea that German adults were "lost causes"[27] began gathering momentum based upon preconceptions concerning the character of German youth. Furthermore, the role of children as "future citizens of the world" and the coming leaders of Germany played a part.[28] Building upon these assumptions about the impressionability and importance of German youth, some Americans believed that deprivation impeded the re-education effort, and thus the goals of the occupation, because it spawned problems of delinquency and disruption, as well as "hunger, [and] disease."[29] As a remedy, contributors to "The B-Bag" suggested that Americans provide German children with excess American supplies and food to combat the problems associated with need.[30] By doing so, one-letter writer believed that the aid would "advertise our mission as ambassador of democracy," simultaneously helping to prove the adage that "a friend in need is a friend indeed."[31] Another letter printed in the column suggested that assistance given to German youth would help Americans convert Germans to their way of thought.[32] Strongly affected by the notion of democratization and the need for a permanent alteration of German society, Americans let such ideas influence the efforts they made to help German youth.

One of the more controversial American efforts to aid and reorient German youth, the German Youth Activities (GYA) program, is just such an example of American actions influenced by the goal of democratization.[33] Launched in 1946 and operated by

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[27] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 February, 1948.
[28] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 13 July, 1946.
[29] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 7 April, 1947.
[30] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 18 August, 1946; Ibid., 3 September, 1946; The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 7 April, 1947.
[31] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 18 August, 1946.
[32] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 9 December, 1947.
[33] While there were other efforts to democratize and re-educate German youth, such as the denazification of the German education system and the establishment of the America House meeting centres, contributors to

American soldiers in Germany, the purpose of the initiative was to "democratize" German youth by teaching them American team sports, such as baseball and football. Often, American soldiers would also provide ice cream and soft drinks to children during these activities. It was hoped that the provision of interesting leisure activities, supervised by adult American role models, would lead impressionable German youth down the road to democracy. Following a series of letters trumpeting its existence, GYA began to encounter criticism. Some of its opponents claimed that the programme encouraged vagrancy amongst German youth, while others complained that German children were incapable of being reformed.[34] One opponent even questioned the democratizing effects that sports would have on German children, perhaps recognizing the inability of Americans to distinguish between democratization and Americanization. In response, supporters of the activities rallied to the cause. The concept of promoting democracy through sport was defended by one letter-writer who stated that no child was interested in attending discussion groups on democracy, implying that sports held more interest for youth.[35] Even the editors of "The B-Bag," who had lightly dismissed the worth of leisure activities promoted for German youth, at least initially, now came to the rescue of the maligned initiative, claiming it to be worthwhile, further proving the theory that "The B-Bag" was sometimes used as a tool of the Armed Forces establishment.[36] Others in favour of the programme suggested expanding its mandate by allowing German children

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"The B-Bag" failed to mention these actions. Instead, the occupation troops who wrote to The Stars and Stripes discussed matters that mainly related to how they could assist German youth outside of their roles at work. Most likely this is due to the fact that most of the letter-writers to the newspaper occupied positions that had very little to do with these initiatives, as they were garrison soldiers rather than social workers.

[34] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 23 January, 1947; Ibid., 18 April, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 December, 1948.

[35] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 April, 1947.

[36] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 16 December, 1948.

to travel with American adults into neighbouring countries in an effort to further promote democracy.[37] In all, save for one critic of the initiative, both the supporters and the detractors of the GYA never questioned the goals of the program, they merely disagreed on how German youth would best be democratized.

American ambitions to democratize and re-educate German children extended beyond merely giving candy and gifts to the youth or playing games with them. While German schools were ridded of Nazi teachers and textbooks, Americans made other proposals designed to alter German society. Believing that they had uncovered some of the ingrained behaviours and values that Germans passed down from generation to generation and which had created the preconditions for Nazism, some Americans suggested ways of teaching German children beliefs more akin to American ways of thinking. One letter-writer suggested that by teaching German children to disobey people in positions of power, they would be able to alter the traditional German deference to authority.[38] Another recommended the organizing of essay contests for German children in order to promote democracy, thus undermining authoritarian beliefs.[39] Some Americans even attempted to have German children sent to the United States on cultural exchanges to provide these youth with a democratic education.[40] In short, Americans offered numerous ideas to aid in the shaping of German youth.

Eventually, the American affinity for German children led to an ultimate act of sympathy, namely adoption. The first letter within "The B-Bag" expressing a desire to

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[37] Ibid., 26 March, 1948.
[38] The Stars and Stripes, Souhtern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 16 August, 1945.
[39] Ibid., 8 September, 1945.
[40] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 12 April, 1947; The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 February, 1948.

adopt a German child did so within the context of spoils of war. The author of the letter claimed that he wanted to bring the child to the United States in spite of the child's nationality. Appealing to the vulnerability of youth, he stated that he knew that "... [German children] are foreigners, but then someone must take care of these kids," adding "The GIs take lugers, swords, watches, etc., as souvenirs so why can't I take a baby blond?"[41] Later on, another contributor to the column asked about sending a German child to the United States, using as a pretext the supposedly superior education the child would received there.[42] So strong were the feelings of sympathy for German children that one letter writer asked why more youth were not being adopted by Americans, asserting that they were "just growing up and deserved a chance in life."[43] Some Americans were prepared to ignore the taint of Nazism that these children were thought to bear, as sympathy and a desire to help overcame xenophobic notions.

Unfortunately for these would-be adopters, American authorities were slow to react to their proposals. In fact, no official policy on the adoption of German children existed until the Office of Military Government, United States, spurred by American requests, implemented one on December 1, 1947. What existed prior to that date was a convoluted set of confusing rules involving the jurisdiction of a number of separate levels of German and American government. Initially, the adoptions had to go through German courts in order to be deemed legal. Nonetheless, although Americans could adopt German children, their adoption did not automatically confer American citizenship. These adopted youngsters were placed under German immigration quotas and issued an immigration

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[41] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 24 August, 1945.
[42] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 29 May, 1947.
[43] Ibid., 27 November, 1947.

visa in order to enter into the United States. Furthermore, adoptions also had to be registered within the state in which the child was to live. [44] Thus, the process was ad hoc, to say the least. A letter on the subject, written by the Chief of the Legal Advice Branch of OMGUS, admitted as much as while conceding that Military Government had no official policy at the time.[45] Thus, the process of adopting a German child was both complicated and in need of change. Americans who wanted to adopt German children, but were deterred by this confusing process, began to lobby for amendments to the procedure.

As a result of the sheer volume of demand that would-be-adopters expressed throughout the better part of 1947, Military Government Law No. 10 was enacted. This legislation managed to streamline and codify the steps allowing Americans to adopt German children. Among the requirements was a stipulation forcing adopters to familiarize themselves with American immigration laws, since American citizenship was still not conferred upon adopted Germans automatically. Also, those who wished to adopt needed to acquire the appropriate documents from the authorities in the state where the child would reside. Once these steps were taken, submission of an application to adopt needed to be made to AMG for approval. Once approved, an investigation into the prospective child's background had to be made by German authorities, a process reminiscent of the laws governing American-German marriages. If all of these requirements were met, then and only then, could a German child be adopted and sent to

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[44] Ibid., 22 June, 1947.
[45] Ibid.

the United States.[46] While the passing of the law did not reduce the stringent restrictions already in place, it did clarify the process a person needed to follow in order to adopt children. Once again, the rank and file had exercised their power, this time simply by demanding information on how to adopt. In response, AMG delivered a positive, albeit limited, result.

Paradoxically, the process to bring children born to American soldiers and German women to the United States proved even more difficult. Although very few letters were printed on the subject, a handful of American men who had impregnated German women stepped forward to enquire about their chances of returning home with their children, along with their female love interests, or remaining in Germany with their new families. The first such request printed within "The B-Bag" was met with a wait-and-see response in the "Editor's Note," as a representative of AMG replied by stating that the issue was "a matter for a future determination."[47] Once again American officials seemed to be caught off-guard by the requests of soldiers.

By 1946, official policy on another issue took care of the requests of troops wanting to stay in Germany with their new families. Circular 181, which set forth the rules regarding inter-marriage between Americans and Germans, addressed the issue of Americans wanting to stay in Germany. The circular stated that both civilian and military employees of the US War Department could not remain in Germany with their new families. Due to the threat that these relationships posed to the integrity of the occupation and its objectives, AMG decided that such soldiers had to either be sent home or to resign

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[46] Ibid., 22 February, 1948.
[47] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 19 March,1946.

from employment by the United States Government. Underscoring these regulations was the reply to a letter criticizing the rules, in which the letter-writer had suggested that American-German families remaining in Germany would provide a good example to others in the country. The "Editor's Note" that followed the criticism reiterated the rules, and followed up the re-articulation with the observation that "[such a relaxation of policy] would serve to reward immorality and penalize those who practice continence."[48] In addition to maintaining the integrity of the occupation and its goals, the rationale behind the law attempted to regulate the morality of American men by not inadvertently rewarding them for the results of sexual relations out of wedlock.

The men who wished to return to the United States with their sweethearts and children were also condemned for their immorality. In a letter questioning the regulations regarding the immigration of German brides and fiancées to the United States, one letter-writer asked why pregnant women or those with American-German children were not granted the benefit due to extraordinary circumstances. The author asserted that "It seems rather senseless to fill the orphanages over here with children who have a good chance at life in America."[49] Not surprisingly, American authorities responded to such a criticism with a comment that echoed the previous reply regarding men who wished to remain in Germany. "The combined Travel Board, OMGUS" issued the following answer:

> "Granting special privileges in cases of pregnancy or illegitimacy would indicate that EUCOM Headquarters approves such illicit intimacies and places a premium thereon. Such a policy would be unfair to those individuals

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[48] The Stars and Stripes, Rhine-Main Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 5 February, 1947.
[49] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 18 March, 1948.

> who desire to marry Germans but have refrained from engaging in intimate relations."[50]

Once again, American authorities were unfazed by arguments that drew upon talk about democratization, or in this case, upon the widespread sympathy felt for German youth. Instead of taking pity upon one of the war's final victims, the reply from the authorities focused upon the perceived immoral aspect of relations between American men and German women. In the end, the note showed that AMG tried to avoid reinforcing the rampant immorality of American troops, by seeming to reward them for their actions with a loophole in regulations set to promote queue jumping. Unfortunately for the children of these encounters, many were left to single parents or orphanages in Germany at a time of extreme hardship.

Surprisingly, in each of these circumstances, no mention was made of the nationality of the children in question. Logically it could be assumed that these children would automatically become American citizens due to their parentage. However, due presumably to the unsanctioned nature of the relationship between the parents, these children were not granted any such citizenship. As a result, they were left behind in Germany, for all intents and purposes, to assume German citizenship. Bound by the conflicting tensions between occupation goals and rank and file actions, AMG appears to have chosen the former over the latter, deeming the integrity of the occupation more important than the fate of American-German children born-out-of-wedlock.

Proof that German children occupied the highest place of all German groups in the hearts of Americans is evident in how contributors to "The B-Bag" discussed them in

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[50] Ibid.

relation to other segments of German society. Specifically, Americans frequently suggested that German children were somehow more worthy of American aid than their adult female counterparts. Frequently, Americans argued to have army resources made available to German children, although there were few similar arguments made on behalf of German women. Americans seemed to be guided by a degree of misogyny in suggesting that Germans other than the "adult fraulein [would be allowed to revel] in the good things of this occupation."[51] Others stressed the potential for the democratization of German youth, suggesting that children should have access to American cinemas while German women could go wanting; "From a democratic standpoint, it would be more beneficial than having frauleins go every night."[52] Even the topic of immigration to the United States became a flashpoint. With the innocence of youth again playing a role in relevant discussions, Americans advocated more German youngsters be accepted for immigration to the United States, at the expense of women, because "children are just growing up and deserve a chance in life."[53] With sympathy, democratization, and misogyny all playing a part in the thought process, German children were consistently ranked higher than German women in the minds of Americans in Germany. Thus, in light of the fact that German women were thought of and treated better than German men, it seems that German children appeared to occupy a most-favoured status when it came to all age and/or gender groups within German society.

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[51] The Stars and Stripes, Southern Germany Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 20 June, 1946.
[52] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 9 August, 1947.
[53] Ibid., 27 November, 1947.

If the members of the Nazi Party were the ultimate symbol of German depravity, militarism and authoritarianism, then German youth became the symbol of hope for a positive German future. While the first Americans to occupy German soil let the doctrine of collective guilt influence their opinions regarding German children, once the doctrine fell out of favour, so too did hostile thoughts about German youth. Sympathy for the plight of these hard-luck children quickly replaced bitterness. The image of the athletic and potentially lethal Hitler Youth member was overcome by the reality of the hungry and poverty-struck German child. These sympathetic portrayals were fuelled as much by a belief in the innocence of youth as they were by a sense that these deprived children were also victimized by their Nazi elders. All of these beliefs translated into a smattering of aid efforts, such as holiday celebrations for German children. The best example of sympathy-motivated efforts came in 1947, with a sharp increase in the amount of inquiries regarding the adoption of German children.

Sympathy aside, not all of the aid provided by Americans to German youth was motivated by altruism. In some instances, aid was provided to German children in order to prevent more serious problems from developing. With the threat of disease and political instability casting large shadows, Americans wanted to protect the ultimate goals of the occupation through the extension of charity. Although not officially organized or sanctioned, CARE packages were disbursed and other necessary aid was given.

Democratization, one of the biggest objectives of the occupation, also played a big part in the decent treatment of German children. Already firmly committed to the idea of democratization, the belief that children were more malleable than adults took hold of most Americans in Germany. Disseminate democratic values meant catching the

attention of children by providing food and other goods, so Americans linked need with democratization efforts and German youth. Through the GYA in particular, Americans hoped to promote democracy to a group they believed would be the most receptive to it.

There were limits to all of these efforts, and these limits came particularly in the form of American-German children. While Americans offered aid for poor German children, their own offspring in Germany were not given the same opportunities that other, full-blooded German children had been provided. Fuelled by ideological and ethical concerns, this select group of children, born to American fathers and German mothers, were denied the prospect of immediate immigration back to the United States. Instead, the nationality of these children was ignored, and they were left as some of the final victims of the Second World War.

Conclusion

One of the goals of this study was to examine how Americans occupiers thought of Germans during the occupation, and to test the widely held theory that these opinions changed rather rapidly in favour of the Germans. In that regard, the process of rehabilitating the German image in the minds of Americans was much more uneven than most historians suggest. When Americans initially set foot on German soil, they were fuelled by a hatred resulting from a prolonged military conflict against the German nation and the discovery of Nazi crimes. Buoyed by the doctrine of collective guilt, such hatred allowed few Germans to escape the scornful gaze of their American occupiers. Even groups that were not actively involved in Nazi atrocities or engaged at the front, such as German women and children, were viewed with contempt because of their affiliations with Nazism. Insulted, scandalized and dehumanized, Germans were viewed as the epitome of evil by many Americans during the early months of the occupation.

As the occupation wore on, Americans quickly grew more accepting of the people around them. Once they entered Germany, the exchanges they had with German women and children showed them that not all Germans were monsters. Eventually these exchanges became so frequent that they were officially sanctioned and deemed acceptable by most Americans in Germany. These developments progressed to the point that Americans eventually had the freedom to marry and adopt Germans. In the end, it seemed that the occupiers believed that Germans in general were not that bad.

Acceptance notwithstanding, Americans also continued to cling to some of their less liberal beliefs about Germans. Even though individual German women were sometimes adored and treated respectfully, women as a group were regarded as

dangerous by most Americans. Nazis were continually reviled throughout the period. The association between Nazism and German masculinity did not help the cause of German men either. Unless males were discussed within a Nazi and POW context, where the portrayal was negative, they generally were not discussed at all. Although most German children escaped the persistent hatred of Americans in Germany, they too endured a measure of prejudice levelled at them throughout the occupation, as some occupiers questioned their need for assistance or assigned them a lower priority than the children of other nationalities. Images of German people as a whole were framed by events of the past. The stain of blood from two world wars and numerous far-too-recent calamities in Europe weighed heavily on American opinions of Germans. This weight took form in the doctrine of collective guilt. Although this notion eventually fell out of favour with Americans in general, it never totally disappeared amongst Americans in Germany.

The gradual change in American opinion over the course of the occupation can partially be attributed to the more complex view of German society that Americans developed. Although "Germanness" was emphasized a great deal when Americans considered various German social groups or age cohorts, it was not the necessarily the overriding factor that determined how Americans felt. Key to these differentiated views of Germans was a belief that certain groups held different degrees of responsibility for Nazi crimes. In an understanding more complex than that suggested by the collective guilt doctrine, many Americans began to see each group within Germany as distinct from the other. Certainly Nazi Party members and high-ranking officials bore the brunt of American anger, but there was a perceived differentiation even within this group. The

Nazi leadership was charged with the highest level of blame, not followers or hangers-on. Women, excluded from the upper echelons of the Nazi hierarchy, were also treated with less scorn, as illustrated by the high level of fraternization that went on between this group and American men. However, some measure of disdain persisted, perhaps owing to the contributions that German women had made to the Nazi war effort that had enabled their male counterparts to wreak havoc on Europe. Even less implicated were the German youth, who were eventually hailed as innocents and as victims in many circles. In all, Germans were viewed as a diverse group, incapable of being completely pigeonholed because of their nationality.

Ideas other than simple or complex notions of guilt also governed how Americans viewed the German people. The widely held conqueror's mentality also contributed to further separating Americans from the people whom they had conquered. Fuelled by an assumption that Americans should enjoy better conditions than the German people, mainly due to the Allied victory along with the superiority of the American cause, Americans justified all kinds of self-interested behaviour from segregation of trains to the requisitioning of German property. The come-as-conqueror mentality also proved the limits of tolerance for German women since the enlisted men put their own personal desires to enter officers clubs above their considerations for the feelings of German women. The fear of German military revival, similar to that which occurred during the inter-war period, also negatively coloured American impressions of Germans. This belief also influenced the strong American commitment towards denazifying Germany and encouraged American authorities in drafting strict immigration rules for Germans. Misogynistic beliefs about the supposedly manipulative nature of German women also

prevented a full rehabilitation of German womanhood. Given prevailing notions about the insidious nature of Nazi propaganda, German women were believed to be the advance guard of a German, if not Nazi, revival. According to these beliefs, many German women were manipulating American men by the power of suggestion and temptation. The concept of democratization and the desire to re-educate and rehabilitate Germans in order to avoid future conflicts influenced how the image of the German would undergo a positive change. By realizing that Germans were capable of being democratized, Americans came to believe that they were also redeemable in other ways and not worthy of the draconian measures outlined in the Morgenthau Plan. However, the by-product of democratization was the pseudo-imperialistic idea that American practices were superior to German ones and that the American ways should be imposed upon the German people.

Although strongly influenced by general impressions of "Germanness," American opinions were equally moved by individual observations and experiences in Germany. The initial dealings that Americans had with Germans taught them that not all Germans were bad. As the occupation wore on, relationships with individual German women persuaded a number of American men of the respectability of many such women. Images of starving Germans, especially youth, also fostered sympathy for a once despised group. This sympathy eventually translated into a firm belief in the innocence of German youth and a hope for their future. Thus, both general ideas and personal interactions between Americans and Germans played a part in the development of American notions about Germans.

Also inspiring this study is the belief that ideas and opinions illustrate more about the people who hold these notions than about their subjects. Due to the critical nature of

the letters-to-the-editor columns within The Stars and Stripes, we can recognize how such mirroring reflected American images of Germans during the occupation. What the metaphorical mirror reflects to observers is that during the 1940's, American ideas and actions in Germany were governed by a series of conflicts between different groups of Americans.

These conflicts included the long running battle between American men and American women. These debates centred on the inequalities that women had to endure and how men justified them. Within the context of the occupation, they came to be typified by the fraternization double-standard where American men could fraternize with German women, but it was too dangerous for American women to associate with German men.

White Americans and black Americans also came into conflict with one another. Albeit poorly illustrated through the "Mail Call" and "B-Bag" columns, the issue did arise on a number of occasions. In particular, double standards perpetrated by American authorities against African-Americans were briefly addressed by some soldiers who compared racist American policies to Nazi ones. Another conflict was waged between the genders, as illustrated in the various debates regarding fraternization. Once again one group, in this case women, stressed double standards in the treatment that each group received when it came to consorting with German members of the opposite sex. What the debates reveal about Germans is that American society in Germany was divided along racial and gender lines.

Completing the three major conflicts between identity groups that American society in Germany revolved around was the issue of class, or in this case, rank. The

particular military nature of the occupation ensured that rank friction instead of class conflict would come into play. The letter columns were overwhelmingly a preserve of the rank and file and provided them with a forum where they could criticize their social and military superiors in a public fashion. In particular, the specific example of arbitrary officer privilege came under fire from a rank and file who were increasingly fed a diet of democratic propaganda. Ironically, the rhetoric reflecting the moral justification of the occupation at the same time undermined the credibility of those authorities who enforced it, at least in the eyes of their military subordinates.

Although claiming to be the voice of the enlisted men, the letters columns of The Stars and Stripes also performed another function altogether. Instead of steadfastly defending the interests of the rank and file, the editors of the columns usually sided with the Army brass. Through the use of regulatory "Editor's Notes," comic panels, letter placement and, most importantly, editorial decisions about content, the editors of "Mail Call" and "The B-Bag" consistently reinforced the ideas and priorities of the occupation authorities. While it bears stating that the mere inclusion of such letters was important in spreading anti-establishment messages, these ideas often encountered censure from the people who put the columns together.

The previous points taken, the "Mail Call" and "B-Bag" columns prove the triumph of persistence in the face of opposition and adversity. In spite of various attempts to control the ideas of enlisted men, and later the common people of the occupation community, the rank and file persevered. In fact, not only did they illustrate their stubborn resistance to authority, these groups also showed their ability to affect change. The fact that such an inflexible organization as the US Army changed many of its

policies on fraternization, adoption, and marriage between Americans and Germans, all due to the complaints of its own foot soldiers, shows just how powerful this group became. There were limits to this resistance, such as demonstrated by the Army's firm resolve regarding the immigration of American-German babies, but the rank and file of the occupation exercised their influence in a both a powerful and skilful manner.

Following a trend in the historiography of the occupation, this study has tackled social and cultural aspects of the period, rather than diplomatic or political matters. The very nature of public opinion necessitates that the emphasis shift from what the authorities were doing and towards how the rank and file of the occupation were reacting. In the final analysis, someone must pay attention not only to the political and military actions of the elites, but to what the masses were thinking. New ground has been broken here, as American public opinion is an area within the historiography of the occupation that has not been addressed to date. In fact, no sustained attempt has been to restore the voices of the Americans who occupied Germany. This study is perhaps the first to do so.

Much of the historiography on the American occupation has emphasized the policy debates and proposals of the elites and has suggested that they were pivotal to the occupation.[1] Much work has been done on various proposals like the Morgenthau Plan, particular occupation policies like JCS 1067 and 1779, and specific speeches like the ones given by James Byrnes in Stuttgart in the autumn of 1946 and George Marshall at Harvard University in June 1947. Each one of these topics have been singled out

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[1] For examples see Harold Zink, The United States in Germany: 1944-1955, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1957), John Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945-1949, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), Warren F. Kimball, Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-1946, (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1976).

precisely because they were seen to have shaped the way in which the occupation unfolded, often signalling key turning points. In essence, it was taken for granted that the ideas behind these grand schemes filtered down to the Americans who occupied Germany and to the Germans themselves.

It is true that the average American in Germany was affected by many of the broad concepts encapsulated within the general policy directives. In particular, Americans were temporarily swayed by the collective guilt arguments that inspired the Morgenthau Plan. They were also deeply influenced by the goal of democratization emphasized in the more generally punitive JCS 1067. However, the soldiers of the occupation do not appear to have much knowledge of the policy debates and proposals beyond some broad notions. In fact, many Americans were unaware of their role in Germany. One of the occupiers even went so far as to ask AMG about American accomplishments and future aims in Germany, while another requested the authorities initiate education programs for all Americans in Germany in order that they be properly informed about their mission in the conquered land.[2] If the utterances of these men are any indication, the lack of discussion about policy suggests that such things did not play the pivotal role in the everyday occupation that they were thought to play by most historians.

What really influenced the occupiers were the experiences they had with the German people. These often shaped American thinking in Germany more than the substance of the overarching policies. Clearly the relationships that American men had

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[2] The Stars and Stripes, European Edition, Pfungstadt, Germany, 19 January, 1949; Ibid.,. European Edition, Altdorf, Germany, 27 April, 1946.

with German women pre-occupied them to the point that they engaged in a full-scale campaign to liberalize all aspects of the regulations governing these relationships, as well as spurring them to launch a more limited effort to improve the conditions of these women. In the case of the aid to German children, the sympathy that Americans felt as a result of having to see deprived and starving German youth translated directly into grass-roots charity efforts on the part of the occupiers. Thus, while scholars like Eugene Davidson have made such claims as JCS 1779 "marked the end of collective punishment of Germany,"[3] such claims do not ring entirely true because many Americans had already abandoned the prospect of universally punishing all Germans, having already treated many women and children positively prior to April 1947. Often discounted, these personal interactions and observations were highly influential in determining the feel and nature of the occupation, at least from the perspective of the American occupier.

It is, however, interesting to note that broad interest in policy really only seemed to surface once an individual held a personal interest in the outcome of the policy in question. This is why Americans often dwelled upon policies and regulations that did not reflect the main thrust of the occupation, such as those governing fraternization and marriage. Instead of worrying incessantly about the trials and tribulations of the de-cartelization section of AMG, Americans worried obsessively about whether their German brides could be transported to the United States. Driving rules were emphasized over the re-education efforts in German schools precisely because average Americans were more concerned with their personal well-being on the roads of Southern Germany

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[3] Eugene Davidson, The Death and Life of Germany: An Account of the American Occupation, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), 170.

than they were with what went on behind the closed doors of German classrooms. However, extending this theory too far is dangerous, because, as mentioned above, many Americans also continually stressed the importance of such policies as democratization and denazification. Perhaps some of these findings can be related to the nature of the source material used here, as the letters-to-the-editor columns were primarily utilized as a sounding board for the personal issues that concerned American occupiers. Nevertheless, it is clear that a great deal of self-interest motivated the preoccupations of individual Americans in Germany.

While providing many insights into the thoughts and motivations of the average American in Germany during the occupation, this study is, by its very nature, incomplete. This deficiency can be blamed on the fact that in an attempt to focus, this study has only utilized one primary source, the letters-to-the-editor columns of The Stars and Stripes. The major problem with using a source as constrained as these columns is that it limits the amount of topics available for analysis. The purpose of the column, i.e., to provide the forum for a gamut of American complaints, excludes many issues that are of major interest to historians of the occupation. Plainly stated, if an issue did not negatively affect American GIs in Germany, it often failed to garner attention within the column. For instance, the seamier sides of American behaviour in Germany, such as violence against German men and women and black market activity, are all but unexplored in these columns, save for a few moralizing letters, primarily because contributors to the column were not negatively effected by such incidents. Thus, many of the controversies prevalent in the history of the occupation as a whole remain untouched here due to the limitations of the sources.

This fact leaves the possibilities for future research on this topic wide open. After all, this is the first sustained foray into the history of American public opinion regarding Germans, using the American occupiers of Germany as a subject. Since the nature of the source has helped pre-determine the parameters of the discussion, it is by no means exhaustive. Expanding the scope of analysis beyond these narrow parameters would involve looking at different source material. Luckily, there are other sources that can be explored. There are numerous other contributions to the soldier-press during the early parts of the period that could be analyzed, including the periodical Yank, which may have less negativity expressed in its letters columns than those of The Stars and Stripes, since they were not conceived of as merely a grievance-airing device. Furthermore, there are surveys of American soldiers carried out by the Information Control Division, which later became the Information and Education Division of AMG, and which ask the occupiers what they thought about a range of questions, including their feelings on fraternization. Personal correspondence between Americans in Germany and their relatives in the United States may also exist, as well as a host of other sources for the historian to analyze. As far as the topic is concerned, this may be the opening gambit in a wider process of discovering what American occupiers thought and, by extension, how they behaved.

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