



www.becoming-german.de

Project Description
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becoming german - a database

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becoming german - on the road

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Aim of the Database



Winnetou and I, Galeria Kaufhof, Cologne, 2004

The aim of the internet database "Becoming German" is to provide a digital source of information and assistance to those who do not have a German childhood and would like to "become German" or for those who would simply like to have a different German childhood.

There are two ways to use the database: either memories of growing up in Germany can be entered into the database i.e. "donated" or details of an imaginary childhood in Germany can be "received". The childhood memories which are "received" are compiled from the data which has been "donated" and represent memories of a possible German childhood which can then be appropriated as one's own.

The database is a work in progress. At any time it can be revised and it grows with every "donation".

How does the database work?



Screenshot of the internet database "becoming german"
www.becoming-german.de

The database can be found in the internet at:
www.becoming-german.de

There are two ways to use the database. Childhood memories can either be "donated" or "received". On the first level the user interface of the database consists of one form each for "donors" and "recipients". At this level both groups of database users are required to answer the same questions pertaining to their own childhood (e.g. number of siblings, living situation etc.).

Donating Childhood Memories

After submitting the first form "donors" i.e. people who have grown up in Germany may select one or more of several given childhood memory fields (favourite book, favourite song, grandparents, general memories etc). In each of these fields the donor is required to answer questions about specific childhood experiences. In this way comprehensive data necessary in determining a possible collective - but also subjective - German childhood is collected.

Receiving Childhood Memories

When a "recipient" form is submitted the personal details entered are compared with the donated database entries and a list of matching German childhood memories is compiled.

The database is programmed so that each received childhood is a combination of memories from the best matched donors; it is unlikely that any childhood will be from one donor only. The two factors year of birth and sex are given priority. Each received childhood will be from donors within five years either side of the recipient's own year of birth and the memories will only be from donors of the same sex as the recipient. In future the compiled childhoods will also be geographically grouped.

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Screenshot - Donor Form

Donating a childhood

Memory fields:

Please select a field in which you would like to donate memories. You can enter as many or as few memories as you choose. If you would like to suggest new memory fields or make comments on the existing fields please write me a mail.

When you have finished donating please click [HERE!](#)

Memory fields:

- grandparents
- children's birthday party
- favourite book
- favourite fairytale cassette
- favourite song
- other memories

Further memory fields to come ...

becoming german -- eine deutsche Kindheit spenden - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Tiscali

Adresse <http://www.becoming-german.de/giverOptions.php>

kindheit spenden

... oder doch lieber empfangen?

Erinnerungsbereiche:

Bitte wähle einen Bereich aus, in dem Du spenden möchtest. Du kannst so viele Erinnerungen eintragen wie Du möchtest. Bei Vorschlägen zu den einzelnen Bereichen, bitte eine Mail an mich schreiben.

Wenn alle Erinnerungen gespendet sind, klicke [HIER!](#)

Erinnerungsbereiche

- [Großeltern](#)
- [Kindergeburtstag/Party](#)
- [Lieblingsbuch](#)
- [Lieblingshörbuch](#)
- [Lieblingslied](#)
- [Andere Erinnerungen](#)

Weitere Erinnerungsbereiche folgen ...

Wenn alle Erinnerungen gespendet sind, klicke [HIER!](#)

becoming german

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Screenshot - Recipient Results

Receiving a childhood

You are:

female and you were born on **09.06.1973**.
You are the **eldest child** and you have **one sibling**. You grew up with **your parents** and you shifted home **once** during your childhood. Your favourite hobby as a child was **football** and your favourite colour was **blue**.

Your favourite book as a child in Germany was:

(With a probability of 70%)

Woman Chief by

Your favourite characters were **main character (?)** and **supporting character (White feather)**

The story was about:

It was about a Indian girl who was stolen by another tribe and grew up with her "fosterparents". Her new father was very generous and let her be like a boy, later she married a woman.

It was your favourite book because:

I could identify with the characters in the book and dreamt of another world.

How did the book influence your everyday life:

when I cycled to school my bike (I tied a rope around the handle bars) was my horse which accompanied me

The book was important for me when I was about **7/8 years** old.

becoming german -- eine deutsche Kindheit empfangen - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Tiscali

Adresse <http://www.becoming-german.de/requestResults.php>

kindheit empfangen

... oder doch lieber spenden?

Du bist:

weiblich und am **09.06.1973** geboren.
Du bist **ältestes Kind** und hast **ein** Geschwister. Du bist **den Eltern** aufgewachsen und Ihr seid **einmal** umgezogen. Dein Lieblingshobby als Kind war **fussball** und Deine Lieblingsfarbe war **blau**.

Dein Lieblingsbuch als Kind in Deutschland war:

(Mit einer Wahrscheinlichkeit von **70%**)

Woman Chief von

Deine Lieblingsfiguren waren **hauptperson (?)** und **nebenperson (Weiße Feder)**

In dem Buch ging es um:
Um eine Indianerin, die von einem fremden Stamm geraubt wurde, und die bei ihren "Ersatzeltern" aufwuchs. Dort hatte Sie einen großzügigen Vater der ihr erlaubte wie ein Junge zu sein, später heiratete sie eine Frau.

Es war Dein Lieblingsbuch weil:
mit der Identifikation der Figuren dieses Buches habe ich mir eine andere Welt erträumt

Das Buch hat Dein alltagsleben folgendermaßen beeinflusst:
wenn ich mit dem Fahrrad zur Schule gefahren bin (ich habe ein Seil an das Lenkrad gebunden), war es mein Pferd das mich frei begleitete

Das Buch war wichtig für Dich als Du **ca. 7/8 Jahre** alt warst.

Fertig

Internet

www.becoming-german.de

Examples from the Database



I remember my parent's divorce when I was 5; My father visiting me at my mother's cousin's place every now and then. I was the smallest and weakest in my class and was treated accordingly. Everyone at home and elsewhere thought my ideas and thoughts were crazy.
(born 1948)

Sweets from my childhood: exploding lollies, filled bubble gum, shell-lollipops, lolly necklaces, cherries and strawberries. Good and evil old people, giant dogs. Playing doctors, later Bravo (a magazine for teenage girls)
(born 1968)



My parents are nature people, camping freaks. We had one of those trailers that miraculously folds out and is instantly big enough to accommodate several families at once. We travelled around half of Europe with it. My brother and I lived in our underwear, played outdoor badminton, met other children, learnt to swing and of course had to learn to swim at a very early age ...
(born 1981)

Hopscotch = A game played on the street, almost only by girls: The outline of several footpath pavers is drawn with chalk and a number is written in each square, then each player has to jump from paver to paver in a particular order and according to certain rules (right foot, left, both).
(born 1957)



We always spent our holidays in France or Spain, usually with my parents and sometimes with friends. We spent most of the time at the beach – during one holiday my brother had to have his appendix removed and I stayed with an Italian family. The smell of hard-boiled eggs in a hot and stuffy car after hours of driving is a must.
(born 1977)

Examples from the Database



*The adults, especially the teachers, were authority figures.
We had to listen to them and weren't allowed to be cheeky.
The adults told many stories about "the war".
(born 1952)*

*We lived on a busy street and had to be careful when crossing to get to the playground on the other side. Once, when I was 5, I got hit by a car. The driver took me straight to hospital. Luckily I wasn't seriously injured.
(born 1926)*



*I always had to pick up my sister, take out the waste paper, carry down buckets and wash up; In return my father always said: first everyone works together and then party/have fun together; we were usually finished with the work by Saturday afternoon and then we did something as a family (went for a walk, ate ice-cream etc.)
(born 1957)*

*I have fond memories of my grandparents who lived in a village and where I could always play with newborn kittens and ride with my grandfather in his wheelchair along the village promenade.
(born 1970)*



*I remember car free Sundays in the 70s; we roller-skated in the streets. Roller skates and scooters were the best, summer was always warm and in winter there was always snow.
(born 1964)*