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The Amerasian Paradox

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ABSTRACT

Multiple anecdotal accounts and a thin body of extant empirical research on an estimated 250,000 multiple generation, mixed-heritage military Amerasians in the Philippines, and Pan Amerasians residing in other East and Southeast Asian societies, indicates substantial past and present stigmatization and discrimination – particularly Amerasians of African descent. However, a certain segment of Filipino Amerasians, females with pronounced Caucasian features, comprise a paradoxical exception. The abandoned progeny of U.S. servicemen, corporate military contractor and government male workers who occupied permanent bases for nearly a century, Africans and to a lesser extent, Anglo Amerasians, are targets of intense name-calling, verbal harassment and occasional physical violence beginning at an early age. This often transforms into a lifetime of socioeconomic marginalization and cultural isolation. Typically, Amerasians are ridiculed because of differential skin color, facial features and the stereotypical assumption that the majority were children of sex laborers and transient soldier fathers who had forsaken them. However, there is incipient research and anecdotal accounts bolstered by this five participant, purposive sample, multiple-case “pilot” study that young adult female Anglos may have not only eluded the stigmatized fate of the majority of Filipino Amerasians, African or Anglo, but in some cases actually benefitted socioeconomically and psychologically.

Filipino Amerasians, Asian Americans, cultural paradox, stigmatization, mestiza

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The Amerasian Paradox

Introduction

This qualitative, multiple -case “pilot” study focuses on a contradictory sector of the bulk of Filipino Amerasians residing in the Philippines known more precisely as military Filipino Amerasians. The paper’s emphasis is on a comparatively diminutive number of Anglo (White) female Amerasians who appear to have escaped, been exempted or outlasted harmfully longitudinal effects of social stigmatization and marginalization experienced in great magnitude and often with damaging impact on their African (Black) and Anglo Amerasian male counterparts. In order to understand and appreciate the peculiarities and nuances of this cultural aberration, herein described as “The Anglo Amerasian Paradox,” one must first understand the antecedents and complexities of the generally accepted, misapplied and sometimes misunderstood term Amerasian.

The term originally was generic in nature and described the early, scandalous pairing of U.S. American and Chinese nationals by Nobel Prize winning author Pearl S. Buck (Buck, 1930). Buck lived and wrote about Christian and Western missionaries in China in the early and mid-20th Century. The general, mixed-heritage description Amerasian in the most historical vernacular ultimately transformed into a descriptive reference to those who are also biracial or of mixed-heritage origin, born in Asia and “fathered by a citizen of the United States (an American serviceman, American expatriate, or U.S. Government Employee (Regular or Contract) and whose mother is, or was, an Asian national” (Amerasian Foundation, 2003). In this study the specific term Amerasian, which in an anthropological and broader human, ethnic and cultural application might also include Canadians, Eskimos, Inuits and all other North American peoples, refers to military origin U.S. Amerasians. More particularly, these are military Amerasians whose U.S. military fathers essentially abandoned, estranged, orphaned, or failed to provide adequate financial or familial support to their children, i.e. in effect abrogating their responsibilities of fatherhood (Levi, 1993; Montes 1995).

The resultant loss of the military father’s rice winning services usually plunged Amerasian child households into abject poverty (Kutschera, 2010; Levi, 1993; Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1992). In addition to the loss of the father, and the long held stereotype that most Amerasian mothers were sex industry laborers, coupled with Amerasian’s contrasting shades of skin color, physical features and social demeanors transformed them into targets of stigmatization, discrimination, name-calling, incessant harassment, bias and prejudice (Gastardo-Connaco & Sobritchea, 1999). The first generation female Anglo Amerasians described in this paper, and born in the Philippines at approximately the time permanent bases were departing in 1991-1992, are heirs of that sub-culture.

As a further contextual point, Kutschera (2010) originated and amplified on the term *Pan Amerasian* to describe the wide dispersal of military Amerasian progeny scattered throughout East and Southeast Asia. This was the result of U.S. occupation, deployments or post-World War II positioning of permanent bases in nations and territories as diverse as Cambodia, Guam, Japan, Laos, Okinawa, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, South Korea and Vietnam. Indeed, Shade (1980) estimated that between 1945 and 1980 approximately two million Amerasian offspring were fathered by U.S. military personnel.

Kutschera and Caputi (2012) recently projected that there may be as many as 250,000 or more military origin Filipino Amerasians residing in the archipelago today; substantially more than the commonly thought Filipino Amerasian population of 52,000, a figure widely reported when permanent U.S. military bases were ejected by the Philippine Senate in 1992.

The present study has a four-fold purpose. It seeks to: (a) gauge the level of public and social reception of female Anglo Amerasians of late adolescent and early adulthood age, (b) determine the nature of or underlying reasons for any changes or adjustments in such attitudes or perceptions among mainstream Filipinos of either sex, and (c) confirm or dispel anecdotal reports, originating from Amerasians or mainland Filipinos, that many younger, female Anglo Amerasians appeared to be benefitting in a socioeconomic, psychological or cultural sense as attractive biracial persons entering maturity, and (d) confirming or dismissing the existence of this paradoxical feature that appears to have manifested itself upon this unstudied sector of Anglo Amerasians.

Literature Review

There is a chronic paucity of contemporary empirical and evidence-based research literature (i.e., social scientific, mental health, psychosocial, socioeconomic) relating to military origin Filipino Amerasians (Kutschera, 2010). Yet the population contains features of a diaspora like entity on a variety of fronts including its social, cultural, geo-political characteristics and size (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). There may be as many as 250,000 or more mixed-heritage Amerasians residing in the archipelago today, particularly when second generation, elderly Amerasians, as well as infants and adolescents - abandoned or under supported Amerasians born since the signing of the 1999 US-RP Status of Forces Agreement - are taken into account (Bondac, 2012; Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). The dearth of reliable scientific research on military Filipino Amerasians is in stark contrast to broader and sophisticated research relating, for example, to Vietnamese and Korean Amerasians during the Cold War and to Japanese Amerasians of the immediate post-World War II era (Lee, 2007, McKelvey, 1999, Schade, 1980). Unlike the Philippines, Korea and Vietnam hosted U.S. troops and support personnel on their soil in two violent wars during the second half of the 20th Century. These events prompted richly funded research awards from both U.S. government and private NGOs and subsequently fostered greater academic, political and public attention and interest in their outcomes.

Except for a handful of formal empirical research or literature reviews on Filipino Amerasians undertaken in the past two decades (i.e., Cantani, 1997; Gastardo-Connaco & Sobritchea, 1999; Kutschera, 2010; Levi, 1993, Montes, 1995; Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1992), what suffices for authoritative source material are yellowing news clippings, audio and video cassettes from daily and weekly newspapers, radio and TV stations operating in and out of the so-called AMO Amerasian (Angeles-Manila-Olongapo) Triangle. News media reports and most of the formal research essentially report similar conditions: the majority of military Amerasians, and particularly dark-skinned African Amerasians live on the socioeconomic margins. But they are persistently visible in the AMO Amerasian Triangle, believed to contain the highest concentration of Amerasians alive today in East or Southeast Asia

(Kutschera, Pelayo & Talamera-Sandico, 2012). The most recent comprehensive study of Filipino Amerasians is a qualitative, multiple-case doctorate research study (Kutschera, 2010), spanning 2007 to 2010 in Angeles, Pampanga (site of the former Clark air base); it was a purposive sample study involving 16 Amerasians comprising equal numbers of African and Anglo females and males, from two young adult and adolescent age categories. Utilizing the Australian developed Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scales (DASS-21), Kutschera (2010) found 62% of respondents reporting severe levels of anxiety, depression or stress and equal measures of psychosomatic illness.

Qualitative cross-case analysis identified multiple psychosocial risk and mental stress factors, including alcohol and drug abuse, poverty, unemployment or under employment and homelessness. Many factors were stigma related, including exposure to biracial tension and violence, name-calling, abandonment despair, identity confusion and derivative family strain. One finding confirmed that most stigmatized Amerasians were living at World Bank computed per capita household income rates of barely 100 Philippine pesos - or US\$2.50 per day. . In a central conclusion, Kutschera (2010) drew a portrait of at risk and troubled Filipino Amerasians living a stigmatized, poverty ridden, and socially marginalized existence in the back warrens of the developing world.

Also chronicling Filipino Amerasians declining socioeconomic prospects was the Gastardo-Connaco & Sobritchea (1999) study of 443 Amerasians, ranging from minors to middle-aged adults using a personal survey, interview instrument and a focus group. The large, comprehensive study marked levels of discrimination and two primary levels of stigmatization: (a) intensely held beliefs that most Amerasian mothers were prostitutes, and (b) being categorized as African American and the sharp criticisms about dark skins and different physical characteristics. The study reported a higher than normal level of sexual (gender) harassment and name-calling targeting adolescent and teenage girls.

It was from conditions outlined in these studies, bolstered by widespread and reoccurring anecdotal news accounts, that helped spawn the female Anglo Amerasian Paradox hypothesis. Generally defined, paradox refers to a contention or position that is conflicted, yields inconsistency, or produces an aberration. It may be a “seemingly contradictory statement that may be nonetheless true.” (The Free Dictionary, 2000, 2009). A relevant example in social science is demonstrated by the Gibbs (1997) study of suicide rates among U.S. African-Americans. Gibbs demonstrated that Black Americans encountered substantially higher levels of psychosocial risk and mental stress factors, and much more socioeconomic marginalization than White Americans, yet their suicide rates nationwide are lower.

Indeed, there is some contention that interest in evidence based and empirical research into paradox as it relates to multi-cultural, biracial and mixed-heritage populations and certain sought after outcomes is on the increase. Renn (2000) maintained this was true “when the study of multiracialism risks reinforcing the notion of fixed races. Distinguishing mixed-race people as a category assumes there are pure races to begin with and that there are people who are not mixed-race” (abstract). Renn (2000) further held that race does not actually exist except as a societal construct, and like the changing social statuses of the young lives of female Anglo Amerasians as described in this paper, they are subject to the uncertainty of ever evolving cultural forces.

Thus, if the concept of race is driven by the vicissitudes of shifting cultural forces, it did not escape the seemingly pluralistic Philippine culture or even other nation-states hosting Pan Amerasian populations including Japan and Korea. Mixed-race African Amerasians experienced some of the most violent and venal forms of discrimination and hatred imagined in the late 1940s to the 1960s according to Schade (1980), the long time Pearl S. Buck Foundation director. He wrote of how African Amerasian Korean babies were sometimes strangled at birth or treated as non-persons throughout much of their lives because they were denied birth certificates; correspondingly, their Japanese counterparts often lived isolated lives in de facto social segregation apart from mainstream Nippon culture (Conn, 1996; Lee, 2007; Schade, 1980).

How contrasting are these experiences, separated by a few decades of time, to today and the apparent emergence and formation of the Amerasian Paradox mestiza mystique. The beatification of the Anglo Amerasian or Eurasian persona, alongside the mestiza Filipina vixen, emphasizing blatantly Caucasian skin color, phenotypical features and free-wheeling social demeanors (Lago, 2012). This impulse is consequently fueled within Filipino culture by darker women clamoring for skin whitener and bleaching products in an effort to make them appear even more Anglo Amerasian or Eurasian in appearance (Lapena, 2010).

Significantly, the female Anglo Amerasian Paradox may actually exist in part today in the Philippines because of long percolating cultural events occurring not only in Philippine society but throughout East, Southeast and South Asia. All are places where paleness of skin color are highly prized beauty signs for women. Li, et al. (2008) contended this was so in three nations, Japan, Korea and mainland China (Hong Kong), where military Amerasian populations actually date to the World War II years. Li and colleagues contended that paleness of skin was empowering and inspiring; the personification of the Occidental beauty ideal fostered by 19th Century Western colonialism and 20th Century mass capitalist consumerism. But nowhere was the white skin movement more evident in the Asia Pacific than in the Philippines (Illo, 1996). There, largely Malay blooded natives were naturally brown skinned, but intermingled with Spanish colonizers to create the mestizo-mestiza persona. The craving for pale skin and Caucasian features was further fostered by nearly a century of U.S. colonial and neo-colonial dominance (1898-1992); it was largely a capitalist and consumer driven milieu dedicated to replicating the Philippines as a U.S. American culturally inspired backwater (Illo, 1996).

Working Hypothesis

The female Anglo Amerasian Paradox avers that within the military Filipino Amerasian diaspora there are adolescent and young adult women (ages 16-29) with naturally light skin and pronounced and attractive Caucasian features – often described in Filipino parlance as the *Mestiza* or *Tisay* look. These women appear to have broken away from traditional, stigmatizing behavior patterns directed against both African and Anglo Amerasians by mainstream Filipinos.

Whiteness or pale skin is prized and aggressively promoted in the Filipino film, TV, sales marketing and advertising cultures. The success of this mass marketing technique, evidenced by the incredible popularity of skin whitening lotions sought after and purchased by mainstream Filipina women, is a

social phenomenon that has apparently accrued to the socioeconomic betterment and popular acceptance of young Anglo Amerasian women. Hence, the emergence and development of the Anglo Amerasian Paradox, or the ready acceptance of an expanding segment of female Amerasians who have gained easy social acceptance, rapid acculturation, and achieved greater material promise and gain as they enter mature adulthood. This status is in stark contrast to the mass of the remaining Amerasian diaspora that continues in varying degrees as a largely economically disadvantaged and socially marginalized population cohort.

Methodology

Five female military Anglo Amerasian participants were purposively selected from a generally upwardly mobile, middle class social and income level families; the sample's middle class household incomes averaged about 40,000-45,000 Philippine pesos per month, or approximately US\$ 1,200.00 per month. They ranged in ages 21 to 29 with a median age of 22. The sample was drawn from a cohort of first generation military origin Amerasian students, employees, or administrators studying, employed or having been placed successfully in outside employment after graduating, or having studied at some point at Systems Plus College Foundation (SPCF), Angeles, Pampanga. Angeles is site of the former U.S. Clark air base and the 13th U.S. Air Force headquarters. SPCF College, founded in 1985, is a contemporary, rapidly expanding technological, engineering, education, arts and sciences and health professions and vocational trade undergraduate and graduate college with a student catchment area serving central Luzon.

A non-probability, purposive sample selection was chosen for this small, "pilot" study because the methodology provides researchers the opportunity to question and record answers specifically designed to examine the phenomenon under study (Engel & Schutt, 2009; Fortune & Reed, 1999). Prior to selection all participants agreed to the premise that being Amerasian was overall a favorable occurrence in their lives. Then, respondents were asked to judge and reflect upon to what extent (a) their mixed-heritage and biracial origins, (b) personal family situations as daughters of foreign military personnel, (c) status as daughters of Filipina nationals who may or may not have been involved in sexual labor, (d) their Anglo or Caucasian facial and bodily features, and (e) their white or pale skin and personal demeanors which differentiated them from lowlander or mainstream Filipina counterparts had a positive, negative or neutral impact on their lives beginning from early childhood until the present.

The data collection instrument was a semi-structured, open-ended interview questionnaire based on similar, standard structured interview instruments. The interview instrument presented was in English, one of the two official government languages, and mandatorily taught in public and most private primary and secondary schools. Respondents also had the option of having the interview instrument provided in Filipino (Tagalog), the second official language, or Kapampangan, a regionalized Filipino language spoken in West Central Luzon locales.

Research collection focused on a brief, biographical data question section, followed by sections comprised of 12-to-15 questions each on topics covering: (a) childhood and experiences of harassment and stigmatization, (b) adolescence and experiences of harassment and stigmatization, (c) college

experiences including experiences of harassment and stigmatization, (d) present conditions in the context of their identities as mixed-heritage Amerasians..

Findings and Results

Generally, interviews with the five participants found familiar, related patterns, themes and life situations. Similar to African and Anglo participants interviewed in the Conaco-Gastardo and Sobritchea (1999) and Kutschera (2010) studies, sample participants self-reported they were sexually harassed, both as females in a gender definitional sense, but also in a sexually objectified manner (see Karla Jean, Case 1; Renzee, Case 5) in childhood, middle school and early high school years. Later on, as they approached full physical maturity, they were often viewed as voluptuous sex objects, deserving of admiration and respect. This attention originated particularly from males, and secondarily and surprisingly, from women friends or acquaintances who may have envied them for their Caucasian looks and the attention these features garnered. All respondents reported being stigmatized and discriminated against, even if only moderately so in some instances; participants verified that the majority were suspected of being children of Filipina mothers engaged in sex labor.

Salient themes, trends and patterns from interviews included:

1. Distinct advantages by having Caucasian features. Most participants related that because of such attributes (i.e., white or pale skin, hair color, facial features and expressions, body shape) they were consistently praised by Filipino mainlanders and foreigners for being exceptionally attractive. Many participants were chosen to compete in beauty pageants, which remain popular in Philippine culture. It appeared their beauty was linked to and contributed to their popularity, particularly among males. Some claimed many female students would approach them with offers of friendship with the hope their popularity would rub off on their persona;
2. Decrease in stigmatization and discrimination as they grew older. Most significantly, participants claimed there was discernable discrimination and bias towards them in elementary and early secondary school, but this behavior ceased somewhat abruptly as they matured at mid-adolescence. Called epithets such as "Tazay" (slang for Mestiza) or "Here comes Miss Universe," they sometimes felt isolated or segregated from classmates because of their unique physical features. As they reached adolescence, prejudice diminished and notably eradicated by the time of college entrance;
3. Modeling offers are frequent. Several respondents said they already commercially model for small sums and have promotion portfolios. Professional photographers and advertising agents would seek them out because their Caucasian looks and demeanors gave them an advantage over Filipina counterparts;
4. Personal relationships and social life. All respondents maintained it is easy for them to enter into a social or dating relationship with a male because. They reported multiple and consistent numbers of suitors. Because of popularity at school their social lives are hyperactive with many invitations to parties, clubs, discos and various social, house and apartment gatherings.

5. Socioeconomic mobility and career advantages. Because of their acceptance and popularity participants feel the above conditions have, overall, provided advantages in their college careers and contributed to or portend good fortune for enhanced employment opportunities. Accustomed to being the center of attention, Amerasian females exude personal confidence and naturally personify an aura of social approachability, attributes which they believe have helped them secure interviews for financial aid, work study stipends or scholarships, summer employment and permanent workforce job placement.

Case Study Profiles

Karla Jean – Case 1

A 21-year old BS tourism major undergraduate and current “freelance” model, Karla Jean represents one of the most fortunate among the sample, and many military Amerasians. Her late U.S. Army father, rather than abandoning or estranging her mother and her siblings, lived with and supported the family in Angeles until her eighth birthday. She was able to enjoy and benefit from the emotional support during most of her formative childhood years. When her Dad died he left the family survivor pension benefits from a solid 20-years of active service, allowing her to grow up in secure middle class status. In fact, Karla admitted that her father must have loved her a lot because he spoiled her only the way fathers can. Because of him she carries a highly prized if not coveted, blue cover U.S. passport.

Karla Jean’s Filipina national mother met her father through a mutual friend acting as a “tulay,” a Tagalog term meaning bridge, or intermediary, who in this instance played a crucial cupid’s role. Therefore, her mother and father’s relationship was one of the thousands of natural “boy-girl” or “man-woman” relationships that sprouted between U.S. servicemen and nubile women natives living with families residing around or working on one of the dozens of area military bases. Despite the wholesome sense of normalcy at home, Karla endured the taunts and jeers of classmates and the plethora of name-calling and verbal harassment experienced by so many Amerasians. Taunts and jeers that sometimes suggested all military Amerasian children were probably children of Filipina mothers engaged in some sordid aspect of sex labor. At first Karla was recipient of many of the standard catcalls reserved for Anglos including “Tisay” or “white brat” or “white trash,” depending on the tone of voice delivery. Especially disconcerting were nasty and catty remarks from her Filipina classmates who would fire off unsettling telephone text messages or scribble nasty names about her and other Anglos on school lavatory walls. “I was defensive and found myself thinking, ‘maybe they are just very insecure about their own appearance’ and this causes them to act the way they do.”

Inevitably the tide turned. Karla, as most of the rest of the sample, reported that reactions to her Anglo Amerasian persona actually transformed in a positive way as she entered late high school and early college years. Visiting the U.S. mainland on vacation, she was pleasantly surprised to be well received by Americans, some of whom told her biracial features made here appear even more attractive than native Caucasian women. “I felt unique.” Today Karla claims she has a busy social life, many active male suitors, and more personal friends among men than women. There are occasional downsides; some male admirers have become so obsessed with her they have stalked her. Overall her outward

demeanor is one of confidence, self-assurance and an engaging aggressiveness, attributes she hopes to polish and refine as she enters competitive Southeast Asian tourism and travel management trades.

Jessica Marie – Case 2

Jessica Marie, 22, is so white skinned with pronounced Caucasian looks, she probably appears more U.S. American, than Filipino or even Filipina Amerasian to most Pinoy males. A college student, Jessica Marie is also employed as a flight attendant for a Middle Eastern airline serving the thriving Philippines OFW (Overseas Filipino Worker) commercial passenger market. She appears to have proudly overcome a significant measure of sexual harassment and name-calling. Her background includes a not entirely uncommon, traumatic sex abuse incident with her cousin's husband when she was 12 years old. It was a sad occasion because at the time Jessica was living with the cousin's family, as she had with a number of titas (aunts) she'd resided with from her early years. Her military serviceman father and mother met each other at a hotel where her mom was employed as a waitress. Like so many Amerasians her dad walked out of her life at age three. Like so many Filipino Amerasians who have grown to adulthood without either parent, it wasn't long before her mom was out of her life also.

Tall, and strikingly attractive, Jessica is blessed with the classic physique of a female cabin crew member passengers always seem to see in those in-flight magazines when air traveling. Thinking back, Jessica, like Karla and others in the sample, found herself the unwilling object of name-calling and sexual harassment at an early school age. However Jessica admits to being so adorable and cute at an early age that the nasty comments trailed off quickly. "My height, my skin, I think my features and looks actually gave me an advantage quite early in childhood." She was the "favorite" of teachers who complimented her pretty face and friendly demeanor. Like many attractive young women Jessica found herself receiving uninvited attention and even being pestered by older, sometimes unsavory men for dates or social liaisons she had no desire to engage in. She often receives unsolicited invitations to participate in beauty pageants and modeling events and has her choice of any number of available suitors. "Everyone tells me I have the sexy mestiza look that is so sought after and popular amongst Filipina women and men!"

Apple Grace – Case 3

A soft-spoken, thoughtful 21-year old health care services major undergraduate, Apple Grace says when she and Filipina girl pals socialize at a local nightclub or disco she is the first woman young adult males will approach for conversation. That's probably because she admits her skin is naturally pale and she doesn't look Filipino – clearly a condition which wins her favors and attention in adult social situations. That wasn't so in grade school when the differences were cause for contempt and ridicule. She was criticized too for being an orphan with no father, or teased about where he might be.

Apple had little connection with her Dad growing up, but she is in contact with him these days and there has been talk between the two of him filing for an Immigration Service petition to allow her to enter the U.S. and eventually qualify for citizenship. Apple feels she has come a long way from elementary school days when she was castigated "for just being different." Once she was savaged by insensitive classmates (boys) who called her the equivalent of a "Meztisang Bangus," or a multi-racial

fish in obvious reference to the official and popular national fish of the Philippines – Bangus. But slowly, as indicated by others in the sample, the tides began to shift and as an early teen Apple found herself attracting more boy-girl attention from male classmates and less comments along the line of how different she looked compared to lowlander Filipina friends. Having Caucasian features and pale skin have helped Apple gain self-assurance, attract male attention she finds confidence-building, and appreciate a physical asset which she hopes will one day lead to an advantage in obtaining a sought after job in a competitive profession. Apple isn't shy about her ambitions. She feels she'll use whatever physical attributes she has to obtain solid employment and a sound future which one day may include immigrating permanently to the U.S.

Michelle Joanne – Case 4

Michelle Joanne, 29, was the most senior, best educated and appeared to be the most intellectual of the sample. She brought a more thoughtful perspective to the conversation. She admitted that she had a “strong social conscience. I always felt a great deal of emotional identity and attachment in being G.I. Amerasian. I would think about it often.” She particularly felt empathy and compassion for African Amerasians who she maintained “clearly had it the worst over Whites. I saw them stomped on and beaten in the alleyways; many Blacks wound up as street kids and beggars. Nobody knows how many of them died on the streets of Manila. By comparison we Whites just had an easier ride.” An addictions counselor for a drug program run by the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development, Michele has a bachelors in psychology and almost enough credits to complete a masters in community psychology counseling. But her late teenage and early adult years didn't go as smoothly as the storybook scenarios painted by most other sample participants.

A solo mom with two pre-teen children, Michelle is raising her children on her own after her Filipino live-in partner, like so many men in Philippine society, “took off to cohabitate with women after more women.” She managed to obtain her bachelor's degree in her mid-20s, but it was hard to find work in her field. Subsequently she settled for an underemployment situation so common among college educated Filipinas. She also observed, “there were so many male employers who couldn't accept a solo woman parent in the workplace,” so she ultimately worked for four years in one of the many U.S. operated corporate call centers in and around the Clark Economic Development Zone. “They love to hire Amerasian women and men because most Filipinos Amerasians speak North American English.” It was inside the Clark call center that Michelle had a chance to verify how Anglo Amerasian women, with powerful Caucasion features, were blatantly favored over African Amerasian or Filipina national co-workers – especially by Filipino or Chinese Filipino bosses. “It became a little comical because the favoritism was in your face! The prettiest and most mestiza looking Amerasians would always get the day hourly shifts, quicker salary upgrades, and a shorter wait time to become supervisors.”

Michelle confirmed assertions from other sample members that Anglo and African Amerasians alike were recipients of venal name-calling, especially if there was even the suspicion that their mothers were sex laborers. “It was never a secret, my sister and I knew right from the start that our dad was a U.S. air force sergeant from Clark who my mom met in one of the base bars. He supported the family for a brief time. I was too young to remember him.” Eventually her father was reassigned. “The kids at school

weren't stupid and they could tell. They'd call me things like 'G.I. Baby' and 'souvenir kid' all the time. As we got older that kind of talk just receded. Instead, the stigma and discrimination became more subtle. If you were out of the ordinary pretty, like many of the White Amerasian women were, it just never became an issue. Instead the Filipino and even foreigner men would tell you how attractive you were. The change occurred almost overnight."

Renzee – Case 5

A 24-year old tutor, secretary and student Renzee is married and once she graduates from college, the attractive Anglo Amerasian does not expect to have difficulty finding the position she wants. She is "confident," especially if the interviewer is a Filipino male since in previous job quests the most difficult time she had was when the interviewer was female. Renzee is convinced that her mestiza Amerasian skin color and facial features have given her an advantage over other women her age whether it has come to job selections, competing in beauty contests, maneuvering through college, or winning the admiration of mail suitors before her marriage.

Like Michelle, Renzee admits her military father and mother met each other in a night club where her mother was employed. She never knew her father, never knew his last name and knows nothing of his whereabouts today. Not unexpectedly, she took heat from schoolmates who seemed to routinely attempt to make connections between Amerasian kids and the origins of their mother's involvements with their U.S. military personnel fathers. For a while Renzee admits it was a personal and psychological nightmare growing up Amerasian. There came a time in the second grade when an older male was masturbating in front of her. It was a traumatic experience and she felt harassed and humiliated. As a teenager, like many Amerasian with mothers who engaged in sex labor, Renzee became estranged from her. She engaged in disruptive type behavior, became rebellious and had a plethora of boyfriends. Nevertheless, Renzee emerged from her teenage years intact, an increasingly confident young women, who is optimistic about a rewarding professional and personal life over the horizon.

Discussion

Findings generally uphold the core assertion of the female Anglo Amerasian Paradox. This conclusion is sustained as true from the standpoint that – within the particular age cohort selected (ages 21-29), early adulthood female Anglo Amerasian with Caucasian and popular mestiza look physical features and demeanors, are held up for positive attention, respect, admiration and/or prestige. Sample participants claim a fair likelihood of either having benefitted, or having the potential to benefit socioeconomically in the future from such approbation.

Clearly at issue, however, is does this age cohort comprises merely a niche group, benefitting only in a temporal sense given their youthful and most desired mestiza look, is a temporary chronological condition? The limitations of this small, pilot study do not provide for the presentation or answer of longevity or longitudinally-based queries over whether the scenarios presented in the Anglo Amerasian Paradox might hold up under the test of time. For example, will societal reaction, cultural acclamation,

celebrity resembling popularity, and general advantages for female Anglos be the same at age 50, as they are at age 25? Or, will the observation of the late and revered World War II hero and general, French President Charles DeGaulle, hold to be true? DeGaulle is reported to have made the following remark when asked his advice on the longevity of political treaties. "Treaties...are like girls and roses, they last while they last" (Good Reads, 2013).

To be most effective these data must be interpreted and analyzed with insightfulness and caution commensurate with a pilot study conducted with a tiny and essentially highly selected sample. The data suggest that in keeping with basic premises of the study hypothesis, there was a clear, game changing and decided turnaround in attitudes and reactions to female Anglo Amerasians as they progressed to full maturity. Gone or certainly toned down were the stark references to the origin of Amerasians as mothers of prostituted women or mothers involved in sex industry labor. Also missing were the snide and spiteful references to differential physical features, replaced instead with compliments and tributes, most often from males. Strikingly, similar references also originated from female friend cohorts; praise indeed, if not driven whether by pure envy or sincere admiration. These are important insights brought to the forefront despite the sample's limited parameters that provide value for the future researchers to consider.

The current sample size was small, and the semi-structured questionnaire too limited in substance, subjective scope or intellectual sweep to effectively gauge how broad or far-reaching the true impact of differential Caucasian physical features and social demeanors may have on the entire population of Anglo Filipino Amerasians females of all generations. Hence, the question of the study's generalizability comes into play and surely opening the subject for further research discussion. Another study limitation focuses on possible sample participant bias, given that four out of the five respondents (less Michelle Joanne – Case 4), appeared to be transfixed over aspects of their physical attractiveness, beauty, materialism and other rather pedestrian expressions of ego gratification.

More appropriately the Amerasian sample selection may have been opened to participants with wider per capita family income levels including lower middle class or poor classes. Indeed, more deeply informative might have been a slightly more extensive study controlling not only for income but education levels, underemployment and jobless situations, or with female Anglo women who are experiencing high psychosocial risk and stress factors. Such additional perspectives may have painted a somewhat different portrait than the seemingly idyllic lives and lifestyles painted nearly universally by the sample.

Recommendations and Conclusions

A wider scope and larger study sample to investigate solid evidence of the Anglo Amerasian Paradox is needed. Ideally, a number of the following features should be included: (a) a larger numerical sample in the range of 200 to 300 participants drawn from various locations inside and around the AMO Amerasian Triangle and other outlying provinces of the archipelago, (b) a probability study sample using mixed-methodology features including a detailed survey instrument questionnaire and narrative and

statistical analysis features, (c) a similar study comprised of a male Anglo Amerasian component, given that there may be the likelihood of related or replicated life situations accruing to male Anglo Amerasians, and (d) performing a similar study among second generation Anglo Amerasians to address assertions of stigma similar to the type endured by first generation forbearers.

Expansion of the study's geopolitical scope to investigate the paradox phenomena among other Pan Amerasian diasporas and enclaves of the Western Pacific Basin, most notably in Japan, Okinawa and South Korea. There are significant numbers of Amerasians alive with U.S. troops, and military contractor and government employees stationed at these locales today.

Significantly, this study suggests that there may be some optimism for an easier or less stressful integration of second generation female Anglo Amerasians into mainstream Filipino life and the relatively pluralistic Asia Pacific Filipino society as a whole. This indication may also bode well, at least, for a segment of the larger military Amerasian diaspora (i.e., those remaining African and Anglo males and females) on the archipelago, faced with greater but ever evolving challenges of acceptance, acculturation and assimilation.

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