



January 2020

Gemütlichkeit Verboten: The Influence Of World War I Anti-German Sentiments On Prohibition

Susanne Schenk Watts

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Watts, Susanne Schenk, "Gemütlichkeit Verboten: The Influence Of World War I Anti-German Sentiments On Prohibition" (2020). *Theses and Dissertations*. 3128.
<https://commons.und.edu/theses/3128>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

GEMÜTLICHKEIT VERBOTEN:
THE INFLUENCE OF WORLD WAR I ANTI-GERMAN SENTIMENTS
ON PROHIBITION

by

Susanne Schenk Watts
Bachelor of Arts, American Public University, 2014

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

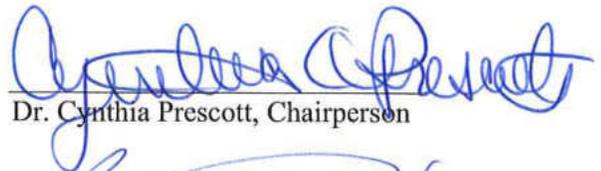
Master of Arts

Grand Forks, North Dakota

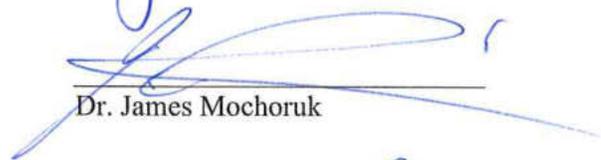
May
2020

Copyright 2020 Susanne Schenk Watts

This thesis submitted by Susanne Schenk Watts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.



Dr. Cynthia Prescott, Chairperson



Dr. James Mochoruk



Dr. Caroline Campbell

This thesis is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.


Dr. Chris Nelson
Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

3/13/20
Date

PERMISSION

Title Gemütlichkeit Verboten: The Influence of World War I
Anti-German Sentiments on Prohibition

Department History

Degree Master of Arts

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of North Dakota, I agree that the library of this University shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised my thesis work or, in her absence, by the Chairperson of the department or the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. It is understood that any copying or publication or other use of this thesis or part thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of North Dakota in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my thesis.

Susanne Schenk Watts
March 04, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: PROHIBITION – FIGHTING THE MENACE OF IMMIGRATION	27
CHAPTER II: SETTING THE STAGE – WORLD WAR I ANTI-GERMAN PROPAGANDA POSTERS: FIGHTING THE HUN ABROAD AND AT HOME ...	71
CHAPTER III: GERMAN-AMERICAN REACTION TO PROHIBITION, 1917-1920	126
CONCLUSION	185
BIBLIOGRAPHY	191

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

American Expeditionary Forces	AEF
American Federation of Labor	AFL
Anti-Saloon League	ASL
Committee on Public Information	CPI
Minnesota Commission of Public Safety	MCPS
National German-American Alliance	NGAA
Non-Partisan League	NPL
United States Brewers' Association	USBA

LIST OF FIGURES

1	The Wet and Dry Map.	29
2	Density of Distribution of the Natives of the Germanic Nations.	38
3	Your Country Calls.	92
4	It's Up to You.	92
5	Remember! The Flag of Liberty – Support It!.	94
6	Food Will Win the War.	94
7	My Daddy bought me a Government Bond.	96
8	When You Fire Remember This.	98
9	Strike Two!	101
10	Defeat the Kaiser and his U-Boats.	103
11	Destroy this Mad Brute.	105
12	I Like Dogs, But not this Breed.	110
13	No Longer Friends.	110
14	Let Me Congratulate You.	112
15	A Toast to Kultur.	112
16	The Evils of Booze.	116
17	Kaiser's Best Friend in the United States.	118
18	Lager Uber Alles.	120
19	Camouflage.	121
20	Ach – Nein – Ich bin ein loyol Zitzen.	123

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the members of my advisory committee, Dr. Cynthia Prescott, Dr. James Mochoruk, and Dr. Caroline Campbell for their tremendous support, guidance, and encouragement during my time in the master's program at the University of North Dakota.

I am profoundly grateful for my parents, who instilled an appreciation and love for history that allowed me to see the connection between hometown history and “big world” history.

Danke, daß Ihr mich in allem unterstützt, was mir wichtig ist.

I also wish to thank my family on both sides of the Atlantic for their unwavering support throughout my academic journey, never questioning my decisions.

I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues at the University of North Dakota for their support and guidance, especially Jake Bourboun for the witty conversations.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to my dear friends Bettina, Christiane, Ute, and Yonca for being a virtual sounding board and providing continuous encouragement through the process of writing this thesis. Von ganzem Herzen, Danke – çok teşekkür ederim!

To my husband Sean,
my midlife co-adventurer and Renaissance man.

ABSTRACT

The proximity and simultaneity of World War I and Prohibition pose questions of a shared and connected relationship. The current historiography falls short to connect these two seminal events and their impact on German-American communities. This study expands the existing literature by analyzing the reactions of two German-American communities (New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri) to Prohibition against the backdrop of anti-German sentiments of World War I. Using a diverse range of sources (anti-German war propaganda material, Anti-Saloon League posters, material from the United States Brewers' Association and US Senate investigation, as well as German and English-language newspapers from New Ulm and St. Louis), this thesis reveals that anti-German war rhetoric played an instrumental role in the Prohibition campaign by targeting German-American cultural traditions. Furthermore, the demographic background of these two German-American communities and their levels of assimilation also influenced their reactions to Prohibition.

Introduction

The centennial anniversaries of the outbreak of World War I (the Great War) and the passage of the Prohibition Amendment have brought them to the forefront of renewed interest. While both events had a significant impact on American society, they especially impacted immigrant communities, and in particular, German-Americans. From the beginning of World War I and the United States' so-called "Neutrality Phase" to the official entry of the US into the war to the Armistice, German-Americans were subject to virulent and often violent anti-German campaigns. German-Americans were automatically suspected of being spies, traitors, and unpatriotic. Anti-German war propaganda helped paint the picture of the disloyal and treacherous "Hun" who needed to be defeated not only in the trenches of France and Belgium but equally on the home front.

The outbreak of the Great War and the subsequent entry of the United States also provided additional impetus for Prohibition supporters. Scholars have researched and alluded to the influence of World War I on Prohibition, particularly in respect to the efforts of the US government to save grain for food production instead of alcohol use. Anti-immigrant aspects of Prohibition have been researched with the focus on ethnic groups coming from southern and eastern Europe. Research on the impact of Prohibition on established ethnic communities, particularly German-Americans, is sparse. Coincidentally, German-Americans dominated the US beer brewing industry. While scholars have examined anti-German World War I sentiments in the US and the anti-immigrant aspects of Prohibition, little research has been done to show how anti-German World War I attitudes in the US impacted the Prohibition campaign. For the most part, historians have been studying and analyzing World War I and Prohibition separately, despite their coterminous overlapping occurrence. Thus,

the proximity and simultaneity of both events also pose questions of a shared and connected relationship.

This thesis demonstrates the connection between anti-German World War I propaganda and Prohibition propaganda and the impact both campaigns had on two German-American communities, in New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri. It examines the questions: What role did anti-German attitudes during the Great War play during the Prohibition debate; and how did the anti-German atmosphere impact German-Americans' reactions to Prohibition? I argue that the Prohibition forces under the leadership of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) expanded and exploited the prevailing anti-German sentiments by targeting German-Americans and by attacking the German-American dominated beer industry.

The Prohibition forces used the crisis of World War I, and the impact of the war is reflected in Prohibition's anti-German attitude. Strengthened by anti-German war propaganda, Prohibitionists specifically targeted German-American cultural traditions with the aim of eliminating German-American social and cultural traditions like the beer garden. I argue that prevailing anti-German attitudes were a driving force for Prohibition and steered its direction during the war years. Prohibition forces extended these sentiments to not only the German-American dominated beer-brewing industry but also to German-Americans in general and continued portraying them as un-American.

Confronted with anti-German propaganda that went beyond the battlefield enemy of World War I, the two German-American communities examined in this thesis did not sit by idly. I argue that anti-German war propaganda also influenced how German-Americans framed their opposition to Prohibition. The founding of New Ulm was an intentional decision

to create a safe home for like-minded Germans. In this tight-knit German community, maintaining German traditions and preserving “Germanness” was simply a way of life for the New Ulm Germans. In contrast, the St. Louis Germans were just one of many ethnic groups. St. Louis was already an established and ethnically diverse town when the first German immigrants arrived in the 1820s. While they held on to their German traditions, St. Louis Germans became more integrated into the polyglot St. Louis community. They represented what historian Frederick Luebke called “stomach Germans,” who spoke German at home, read German-language papers, and enjoyed the conviviality of the beer garden but otherwise were assimilated into American society.¹

Both communities used as case studies in this thesis were aware of their precarious situation and used different arguments to oppose Prohibition. German-Americans in New Ulm, despite being closely watched and under general suspicion from the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS), used their newspapers to forcefully attack Prohibition as being un-American and the antithesis of the American ideals of individual freedom and liberty. German-Americans from St. Louis, Missouri, a more diverse and longer established community, focused more on the economic consequences of Prohibition. Of course, German-Americans did not represent a monolithic bloc of anti-Prohibition proponents. Albeit a minority in the German-American community, some of them supported temperance and prohibition legislation.

While German-Americans generally opposed Prohibition, they did not speak with one unified voice against it. This difference is particularly evident in the two German-American

¹ Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 27.

communities analyzed in this thesis. I argue that the differences in these two communities' backgrounds and levels of assimilation also influenced their reaction to Prohibition. While both communities relied heavily on the beer brewing industry, both economically and culturally, they differed markedly in their expression of their German heritage and traditions. Not only did the majority of New Ulm Germans share a common geographic German home area, they were also bound by common values and ideals. The founders of New Ulm were fierce defenders of the Turner principles of individual liberty, religious and political freedom, and equality.

Influenced by the Enlightenment and the American Revolution, the Turner movement originated in early nineteenth-century Germany to fight not only against the French/Napoleonic occupation but also against the oppressive political system of the German states. While the Turners stressed physical education (Turner means Gymnast), the movement also emphasized a sense of national unity, patriotism, fighting for one's fatherland, and nationalism.² Turner ideas played a critical role in the 1848/49 revolutions across the German states that called for democratic reforms, parliamentary elections, and the unification of Germany. Many of the Turners were persecuted, jailed, executed, or fled into exile. It is in this context that the founding of New Ulm and the persistence to maintain its "Germanness" must be approached.

I am approaching my research questions by using a wide variety of sources, both in English and German. To gain a greater understanding of the beer brewers' approach to counter Prohibition during the war years, I examined the Yearbooks of the United States Brewers' Association (USBA) from 1916 through 1920. I also used the findings of the

² Annette R. Hofmann, "The American Turners: their past and present," *Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte* 37, no. 2 (2015): 120.

1918/1919 US Senate investigation of the relationship between the brewers and the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) that led to the revocation of its charter to show that Congress' anti-German war bias extended into the Prohibition legislation. To further highlight the connection between anti-German war propaganda and Prohibition, World War I propaganda posters provided a fascinating resource. While anti-German war propaganda posters were an obvious choice to examine the development of anti-German sentiments in the US, material by the Committee on Public Information (CPI) also proved to be invaluable. Created by President Wilson through executive order in April 1917, the CPI's main task was to "sell" the war to the American people and create a unified home front. The Committee produced a variety of war-related material, from pamphlets, articles, advertisements, films, speeches, to posters that were distributed throughout the nation. The CPI had over twenty bureaus and divisions across the US to ensure that its material would reach every corner of the country.

The diversity of US propaganda material shows how anti-German sentiments ran like a pervasive thread through all aspects of American society. From recruitment posters urging American men to enlist and fight the "Hun" in the French trenches to "eyewitness" reports of German atrocities to warning Americans at home of the dangers of the "hyphenated Americans," the CPI employed a plethora of strategies to not only ensure American society supported the war effort but also knew who the enemy of democracy, freedom, and liberty was. The CPI's reach into every aspect of American society also ensured that remnants of its anti-German propaganda found a receptive audience with the Prohibitionists' agenda. For this project, I examined posters and cartoons published by the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) to see how pervasive anti-German war sentiments appeared in Prohibition propaganda. While

the majority of ASL material did not specifically use anti-German images, the material that did, made a strong connection between the German war enemy and alcohol producers and drinkers in the US.

Founded in 1893 as the Ohio Anti-Saloon League, the League quickly expanded across the nation and became a powerful, non-partisan organization that focused on the single issue of Prohibition. While the ASL was monolithic in its objective to prohibit alcohol, its supporters came from diverse backgrounds and joined the League for different reasons. The ASL's single-issue campaign offered a unifying platform to these diverse groups and was able to focus and advance its goal of Prohibition. In addition, the ASL helped provide a national public stage for women to voice their concerns not only about alcohol and its effects on the family, but also to bring women's rights issues to the forefront. While this thesis acknowledges the positive aspects of Prohibition, its focus is on the anti-German aspect.

To gauge German-Americans' reactions to anti-German sentiments and Prohibition, I looked at German and English language newspapers in New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri. By using German and English language newspapers, I was also able to compare the reporting of and reaction to anti-German sentiments and Prohibition to see if there were marked differences in their approach. Both German-American communities used as case studies in this thesis published newspapers in German. Were the German language papers more radical and outspoken, or were they more careful and subdued considering the anti-German sentiments of the time? Both German and English language newspapers provided invaluable information. These papers offered insight into what these specific German-American communities felt comfortable to publicly voice about a contentious issue (Prohibition) as an ethnic group whose culture and traditions were under attack.

This thesis is organized into three chapters that follow a thematic structure to better explore the multifaceted connections between anti-German war propaganda and Prohibition. Chapter I sets up the context of the conflict between German-American drinking customs and Prohibitionists by exploring ideas of creating and maintaining German identities while at the same time assimilating into a majority society and the resulting conflicts. The chapter provides an essential background analysis of the diverse German immigrant population and its search for and creation of a shared German-American identity, as well as the development of the Prohibition movement. The chapter takes a closer look at the role leisure habits and public drinking venues played for German-Americans, how these customs clashed with Prohibitionists and contributed to the downfall of the once highly regarded immigrant status of German-Americans. The chapter also examines the role prominent German-American organizations like the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) and United States Brewers' Association (USBA) played during the war to fight not only Prohibition but also accusations of disloyalty and treason.

The second chapter focuses on the theme of anti-German propaganda in greater detail with the help of visual material. It examines a diverse range of anti-German US war propaganda and Prohibition posters to show the relationship between them. While the percentage of anti-German propaganda material in both campaigns was small, its effect cannot be underestimated. It is evident that the ASL adopted the CPI's anti-German war message and applied it to its campaign against German-American beer brewers in particular and German-American social customs and traditions in general. While the Prohibition material was limited to posters and cartoons, the CPI material included a diverse range of sources, with the most visual ones (and perhaps most effective) being anti-German war

propaganda posters. The variety of the CPI material served as a blueprint for the Prohibitionists to wage a successful war against the drinking habits of German-Americans.

The last chapter synthesizes the themes from the previous chapters and uses the two German-American communities in New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri, to analyze how their responses to anti-German propaganda and Prohibition depended on their demographic makeup and their levels of assimilation. Using German and English language newspapers, the chapter examines the balancing act in which they engaged to manage their precarious position during the war. The chapter devotes a more in-depth discussion on New Ulm, as the town's Turner heritage and the MCPS surveillance during the war places it in a unique context. Thus, the history of New Ulm must be acknowledged to emphasize the differences between the Germans of New Ulm and St. Louis. For New Ulm Germans, Prohibition was un-American as it restricted the American ideals of liberty and freedom, which were also Turner ideals. They believed that Prohibition meant they had to give up their Germanness, thus eliminating their rights to maintain their German heritage. In contrast, the St. Louis Germans saw that Prohibition represented a threat to not only German-Americans but to the overall economy. In essence, the responses by the two communities reflected their level of assimilation into American society.

My questions and approach to them occupy a unique place in the historiography. Not only does this thesis draw on different historiographies from a wide range of topics – Prohibition, World War I Propaganda, anti-German sentiments, immigration and German-American identity, Progressivism – but it aims to connect these different historiographies and synthesize them into a coherent whole. This project is unique in that it does not look at Prohibition and German-American reactions to it as isolated events but explores both against

the backdrop of the anti-German sentiments of World War I. National Prohibition did not develop in isolation but must be approached taking into account the backdrop of World War I and its anti-German propaganda. To understand the complexity of Prohibition, we must pay attention to the experiences that accompanied it. Anti-German war propaganda, Progressives' impact on transforming immigrants into Americans, and the German-American experience during World War I are significant factors that affected and shaped Prohibition. In this thesis, I am carving out another space by bringing these historiographies together.

Historiography

The historiography of the influence of anti-German propaganda during World War I on Prohibition is limited and sparse at best. Thus, these limitations force a separate review of the historiographies of anti-German World War I sentiments and propaganda and Prohibition to illustrate not only their current state but also analyze their shortcomings, and highlight their inadequacies in showing a connection between anti-German World War I sentiments and Prohibition. The scholarship of German-American identity during World War I and Prohibition can be divided into two major schools of thought: those who claim that German-Americans eagerly and voluntarily abandoned their culture and traditions because of World War I, and those who argue that German-Americans initially united during the onset of the war to combat anti-German hysteria but then were forced to distance themselves from their ethnic heritage, thus losing their cultural traditions. While this is an important debate, one of its main shortcomings is its approach. German-Americans in the existing historiography have been examined with little regard to their differences in demographic makeup, educational, religious, and political background, and their time and place of settlement in the US. What is

missing from the debate is a more nuanced analysis that takes into account the influence the demographic heritage of German-American communities had on their approach to anti-German sentiments and Prohibition. While some historians acknowledged that German-Americans were not a homogeneous group, they focused their analysis on and relied in their research on material from the leadership elite of major German-American associations like the National German-American Alliance (NGAA), prominent business people, German-American intellectuals, and politicians. This approach results in a very limited view of the German-American experience and neglects to discuss the diversity within the German-American communities.

German-American Cultural Identity

Published over four decades ago, Frederick Luebke's *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I* remains one of the most relevant studies of the German immigrant experience during the Great War in part because it emphasizes that German-Americans did not represent a homogenous ethnic group. Luebke challenged older works by Carl Wittke and Clifton Child, who argued that German-American organizations like the National German-American Alliance spoke for all German-Americans. He disagreed with historians who addressed the issues of German-American loyalty during World War I by relying on material from so-called leadership sources like the NGAA and prominent German-American business people. Instead, Luebke argued that the diversity of German-Americans in economic, social, political, religious, and even cultural matters must be considered if one is to analyze the German-American experience accurately.³ The German-American

³ Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 33-34.

community was so diverse because German immigrants came from very different backgrounds: not only did social and educational differences play a role, but even more so regional differences and thus religious divisions continued to influence German-Americans. Luebke astutely pointed out this important distinction. This distinction is evident in my project, as the demographic background of the New Ulm Germans and their Turner philosophy strongly influenced their reaction to Prohibition. Still, while Luebke's in-depth analysis of the differences within the German-American community is commendable, he paid little attention to how anti-German sentiments influenced the Prohibition debate. Instead, he attempted to explain why American society lashed out against one of the most desirable and assimilated immigrant groups during World War I.⁴ He traced the roots of anti-German sentiments to the post-Civil War German immigration. However, he also seemed to fall into the generalizing trap by claiming that German-Americans' reaction to anti-German hysteria was defeat and abandonment of their cultural habits and customs.⁵

LaVern J. Rippley argued that while German-Americans were already assimilated well before the outbreak of World War I, the war served to briefly revitalize all things German and brought the German-American community together. Rippley based his assimilation claim on the high percentage of Germans taking out naturalization papers.⁶ Without providing clear evidence, he also maintained that the use of German in the US was decreasing rapidly after 1900, despite a high number of German-language publications (especially daily and weekly newspapers), German-Americans still operating their own schools (mostly parochial), and German being the number one foreign language taught in the

4 Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, xiii.

5 Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 206.

6 LaVern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976), 180.

US. His approach makes it difficult to accurately assess the degree of assimilation. German-Americans could certainly become naturalized US citizens but still maintain their German cultural traditions, speak German, and send their children to German schools. It seemed that for Rippley once they were US citizens, German-Americans lost their “Germanness.” Using naturalization rates as the standard to define assimilation is problematic in that Rippley ignored German-Americans who did not naturalize. He implied that non-naturalized Germans were not assimilated at all and that German-Americans, through the act of naturalization, abandoned their German heritage. Contrary to Luebke, Rippley treated German-Americans more as a homogenous group but came to a similar conclusion as Luebke. Once the US declared war on Germany, German-Americans were just too eager to throw away their Germanness as an embarrassing possession.⁷ Rippley’s claim not only simplified a complex issue, but it is also very generalized. He did not take into account the diversity of German-American communities and relied too heavily on the NGAA’s claim to be the official voice of all German-Americans. By neglecting to explore the diversity of German-American communities, Rippley treated all German-Americans the same, regardless of their citizenship status, demographic background, and their settlement communities in the US. As my research shows, there are distinct differences in the German-American communities that are crucial to explain their different reactions to Prohibition.

To a degree, Luebke and Rippley both subscribed to, and expanded upon, John Higham’s argument in his 1955 work *Strangers in the Land*. Higham’s larger study on Nativism also touched on anti-German sentiments during World War I. In it, Higham pointed out that Germans in the US represented a conundrum for Americans and Nativists alike. On

⁷ Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 185.

the one side, Germans were seen as thrifty, industrious, and honest, but "... they insisted belligerently on their right to amusements ... to beer gardens, to Sunday frolics ..." that shocked white middle-class reformers and stood in direct opposition to Anglo-American Protestant sensibilities.⁸ Higham claimed that German-Americans' social drinking habits, coupled with the belligerent demands of strict neutrality by the spokespersons of various German-American associations, contributed to anti-German sentiments during the war. Higham, and later Luebke and Rippley, correctly pointed out the questionable strategy of German-American associations during the first three years of the war. However, Higham completely left out the role anti-German war propaganda played in fanning the flames of anti-German war hysteria.

Paul Finkelman's analysis of German-Americans and anti-German war sentiments provided a more nuanced conclusion. He did not address German drinking customs but claimed that the climate was already favorable for the emergence of anti-German sentiments because Germans had been associated with Socialism, radicalism, and anarchy for decades.⁹ While he disagreed that Germans were well respected and already well assimilated, he supported Higham's analysis that the "100% Americanism" campaign attempted to rid American society of all things German and that the remaining vestiges of German culture had to be destroyed.¹⁰ Finkelman focused on the disappearance of the German language in the American public sphere and did not discuss in greater detail whether German-American

⁸ John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 25.

⁹ Paul Finkelman, "The War on German Language and Culture, 1917-1925," in *Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the Era of World War I, 1900-1924*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Schröder (Providence: Berg Publishers, 1993), 177.

¹⁰ Finkelman, "The War on German Language and Culture," 182-183; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 208.

assimilation was well on its way before World War I or if German-Americans consciously abandoned their traditions once the US entered the war, as Rippley argued.

German historian Katja Wüstenbecker's 2007 study about German-Americans during the First World War is the latest work on the subject. Similar to historians before her, she attempted to answer the question: did World War I cause the disappearance of German-American cultural traditions, or did the war strengthen German identity? Wüstenbecker argued that to appear loyal and "100% American," German-Americans had to dissociate themselves from their ethnic heritage.¹¹ The anti-German sentiments of the war only accelerated German assimilation and the loss of cultural traditions. While Wüstenbecker provided an in-depth study, she limited the German-American experience to the war years and throughout much of her book followed Luebke's analysis. She also focused her research on four large midwestern cities, thus leaving out smaller communities with distinct German heritage. In addition, Wüstenbecker's analysis did not go beyond the German-American experience during World War I, thus she left out an important aspect of the effect of anti-German sentiments on German-American cultural traditions like the beer garden.

Although these studies deal with the German-American experience during World War I and provide an overview of the historical development of anti-German sentiments, it is equally important to take a closer look at anti-German propaganda in assessing the historiography. Several historians have analyzed the role of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) in the evolution of wartime anti-German propaganda. In addition, numerous publications also provided excellent insights into the role of perhaps the most important World War I propaganda tool – posters. In *Picture This: World War I Posters and*

¹¹ Katja Wüstenbecker, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg: US-Politik und nationale Identitäten im Mittleren Westen* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007), 13, 21.

Visual Culture Pearl James argued, “Posters nationalized, mobilized, and modernized civilian populations.”¹² Just like the CPI intended, posters represented a crucial element to unite American society in the war effort. War propaganda posters became a crucial tool for the governments of every belligerent country. James’ work is a broad study that encompasses US, British, and German propaganda efforts. However, she stressed that it is important to consider the evolution of posters as advertising tools, as well as where and when propaganda posters appeared, their target audience, and who viewed them. Not only did posters evoke an emotional response to patriotism and instill a sense of duty to defend the country, but even more so, posters helped to paint a negative picture of the enemy that was then visible for the entire population. Similarly, Celia Malone Kingsbury expanded on the emotional response war propaganda posters elicited. The German war enemy was represented “as a raping, child-butcher, cannibal ape.”¹³ She argued that the war entered into the private space of the family via government-sponsored propaganda material, thus the culture at large adopted and echoed the CPI’s language. The image of the German enemy threatening not only American society in general but people’s homes and families in particular helped to motivate and convince Americans to mobilize to defend against the “Hun.” Kingsbury aptly analyzed how the depiction of the German enemy permeated all levels of American society – even children were supposed to do their part. However, she left out the segment of American society that was perhaps most affected by the war propaganda – German-Americans.

Philip M. Taylor took a closer look at the depiction of the German war enemy and argued that the British monopoly on war news during America’s neutrality phase greatly

12 Pearl James, ed., *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 3.

13 Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 6.

affected the American government, as it proved more beneficial “to influence those who can influence others than to attempt a direct appeal to the mass of the population.”¹⁴ The British influence on American war propaganda was also evident in the posters as many of the images that portrayed Germans as Prussian ogre caricatures and ape-like brutes originated in Great Britain. Taylor maintained that these posters helped to shape and solidify anti-German attitudes in the US, and thus steered American society to support the Allied side.

Several other scholars have studied the role of the CPI in securing support for the Great War by targeting various ethnic groups. Interestingly, as one of the largest ethnic groups in the US, German-Americans received little attention in these studies. Marouf A. Hasian Jr. examined the role of the CPI and the perceived need to create and maintain unified support of the public for the war effort. He argued that the work of the CPI contributed greatly to the war hysteria.¹⁵ Although the CPI, and particularly its chairman George Creel, prided itself on winning the hearts and minds by using factual information, it had to create materials that had an emotional impact on Americans. Sheldon Garon supported other scholars who argued that posters played an essential role in capturing the public’s attention. He provided a useful overview of the CPI’s different divisions and touched on the CPI’s role in reaching out to immigrant communities by producing foreign-language material, hoping to appeal to the diverse ethnic groups and gain their support for the US war effort.¹⁶ Garon’s focus on the CPI’s work with hyphenated Americans is commendable. However, he did not differentiate in great detail between the various ethnic communities. He briefly addressed

14 Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 178.

15 Marouf A. Hasian, Jr., “Freedom of Expression and Propaganda During World War I: Understanding George Creel and America’s Committee on Public Information,” *Free Speech Yearbook*, 36, no. 1 (1998): 48.

16 Sheldon Garon, “Mobilizing for the Great War,” in *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 184.

German-Americans in combination with the populations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which is problematic in itself, as the latter was made up of a multitude of ethnicities that supported opposite sides of the war. Nick Fischer's study carried on Hasian and Garon's work by focusing on how the CPI attempted to accomplish its lofty goal of providing educational and informative material about the war effort to the American public in general. Fischer claimed that the CPI particularly focused on the immigrant communities and compelled them to support the US government in the war effort. However, like his colleagues, he did not differentiate between the various ethnic communities and how they perceived the CPI's propaganda efforts.¹⁷ In his view, the CPI successfully co-opted patriotism and fear to unify the country and endorsed the use of violent images on posters to startle Americans in general out of their indifference.¹⁸

Likewise, Alan Axelrod examined the role of "America's first dedicated ministry of Propaganda" by providing a detailed study of the CPI's organization.¹⁹ While he was the only author who paid close attention to the relationship between German-Americans and the CPI, he failed to recognize the diversity of the German population in the US. Axelrod stressed the dichotomy of the CPI to create the machinery to supervise and safeguard war-related news and materials while at the same time trying to preserve freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Axelrod dedicated a full chapter to the work of the CPI in the immigrant communities. He claimed that for the CPI to have been successful in the foreign-language community, it needed to provide news relevant to the respective nationality in their

17 Nick Fischer, "The Committee on Public Information and the Birth of US State Propaganda," *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2016): 61.

18 Fischer, "The Committee on Public Information and the Birth of US State Propaganda," 69-70.

19 Alan Axelrod, *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009),

native language.²⁰ However, he neglected to realize that German-Americans did not constitute a homogenous group that held a unified position on the war. In the case of German-Americans, the CPI supported the creation of the group Friends of German Democracy that provided the US government direct propaganda access to the German-American community. While Axelrod provided detailed insight into this group, he focused on what Luebke deemed the German-American elite – prominent German-American professors, writers, and businessmen ran the group, thus limiting the experience of the diverse German-American community.

Overall, these studies are critical as they show the historical development of the CPI in general and anti-German propaganda in particular. However, they focused entirely on anti-German war propaganda during World War I and did not go beyond the conflict. They provided excellent starting points to expand research on how anti-German war propaganda helped consolidate and maintain anti-German sentiments after the Armistice. Still, most of these works treated German-Americans as a homogenous ethnic block and disregarded the community's diverse ethnic, social, economic, and political backgrounds, and this must be addressed.

Prohibition

Examining the historiography of Prohibition brings equally mixed results. While historians have acknowledged that Prohibition targeted mainly immigrant communities, they have focused on immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. When Germans are mentioned, it is with respect to the German-American dominated beer-brewing industry, and

²⁰ Axelrod, *Selling the Great War*, 185.

not necessarily as a targeted group because of their ethnic heritage. Perhaps one of the more prolific scholars of Prohibition is German historian Thomas Welskopp who in the last ten years provided several studies on the role German-Americans played in the Prohibition debate. His latest work, *Amerikas große Ernüchterung: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Prohibition*, examined the cultural history of Prohibition and argued that Prohibition was not only about alcohol but was part of a search for a unique American identity.²¹ Prohibition impacted all aspects of American life and society. While Welskopp was more interested in how the Prohibition Amendment presented a break with the liberal tradition of the US Constitution by limiting personal freedom, he touched on the role German-Americans played in the US alcohol industry. However, he limited his study to the beer brewers' strategy of survival and not so much on the effects of anti-German sentiments on German-American cultural traditions, which included maintaining the social tradition of the beer garden. In addition, Welskopp shed light on the relationship between German-American beer brewers and the NGAA, maintaining that it was this association that strengthened the resolve of Prohibition supporters.

Similar to Welskopp, historian Amy Mittelman focused on the beer industry by examining its evolution and development from colonial times to the present. Mittelman examined the history of the beer industry's battle with the government over taxation and temperance. She focused on the role the United States Brewers Association (USBA) played to curtail these threats to the livelihood of the brewers.²² Naturally, one would expect that she examined German-American drinking culture, given that the American brewing industry was

²¹ Thomas Welskopp, *Amerikas große Ernüchterung: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Prohibition* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010), 14.

²² Amy Mittelman, *Brewing Battles: A History of American Beer* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), 2.

dominated by German-Americans, yet the family-friendly beer garden is relegated to a few sentences while she spent considerably more time on the brewers' involvement in the saloon business. While neither historian dismissed the anti-immigrant aspects of Prohibition, they both focused more on the NGAA and the USBA and their relationship with the brewers than exploring the effects of anti-German sentiments on Prohibition.

LaVern J. Rippley's work on the assimilation of German-Americans during World War I briefly addressed Prohibition's effect on the community. He assessed the role of the NGAA and its purpose to defend German drinking traditions. According to Rippley, Prohibition succeeded because German opposition to it was severely weakened by the constant anti-German propaganda and the attacks by the American government on German-Americans' loyalty and patriotism. Thus, German-Americans were only too willing to give up their cultural traditions.²³ In that regard, Rippley acknowledged the role anti-German war propaganda played in the Prohibition debate. Overall though, he emphasized the role powerful German-American associations like the NGAA played in opposing Prohibition. Rippley's study very much echoed Andrew Sinclair's *Prohibition – The Era of Excess*, which also touched on the influence of the National German-American Alliance. Sinclair questioned the wisdom behind the brewers' decision to use the foreign-language press to fight back against Prohibition. He argued that the brewers were addressing the wrong people. The immigrants did not need to be convinced of the positive aspects of beer. Instead of pleading their case in English-language papers, the brewers played right into the "Drys"

23 LaVern J. Rippley, "Ameliorated Americanization: The Effect of World War I on German-Americans in the 1920s," in *America and the Germans, Volume 2: An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History – The Relationship in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 226.

argument that immigrants supported and controlled the saloons and brewers.²⁴ While this may have been a workable strategy prior to the outbreak of World War I, anti-German sentiments quickly labeled the Alliance as being unpatriotic once the US entered the war. In Sinclair's view, the connection between the beer brewers and the Alliance sounded the death knell for their battle to prevent Prohibition.

For several other historians, the connection and relationship between Prohibition and the Progressive movement were of greater interest. James H. Timberlake asserted that Prohibition was an integral part of the Progressive Movement that was promoted by old-stock, native-born, middle-class Protestants.²⁵ Thus, Prohibition represented a perfect fit for the ideals of Progressives. Timberlake elucidated the idea that Prohibition was a struggle between middle-class Progressive reformers and the predominantly urban working class. He also introduced the idea that by supporting Prohibition, Progressives worked to restrict immigration as most of the urban working class were so-called undesirable immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. K. Austin Kerr elaborated on the Anti-Saloon League's (ASL) techniques and organization in getting Prohibition passed. His study focused mainly on the ASL, and the role Progressives and their use of scientific studies played in promoting Prohibition. Kerr acknowledged that the ASL needed to reach the immigrant populations in general, arguing that this represented a problem for the League in the cities that were firmly in the hands of immigrants, political bosses, and saloons and brewers influence.²⁶ Throughout his study, Kerr maintained that Prohibition supporters were enlightened

24 Andrew Sinclair, *Prohibition – The Era of Excess* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 115.

25 James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 6-8.

26 K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 142-145.

Progressives who favored voluntary abstinence but realized they had to educate the public about the dangers of alcohol. To them, national Prohibition was the only way to control the alcohol issue.

Similar to Timberlake and Kerr, Jack S. Blocker Jr. also examined the history of the temperance movement and its connection with the Progressive movement. Blocker provided an excellent study of the various temperance movements, claiming that their tactics evolved from moral suasion to the establishment of the ASL and its use of coercive tactics via the power of state and federal governments.²⁷ Thomas R. Pegram provided an equally thorough study of the history of the Prohibition movement. Similar to Welskopp's work a decade later, Pegram examined "the relationship between American political institutions and temperance reform."²⁸ He also incorporated Blocker's approach by analyzing how the movements changed their approach to battle the liquor trade. Pegram claimed that the temperance movements adapted their tactics to reflect a changing American society.

More specific studies on Prohibition have focused on the role of the saloon. Here, notably Michael Lewis, Alfred McClung Lee, and Ron Rothbart have highlighted the economic and social roles saloons played for immigrant communities. While their work spanned over six decades, all three scholars maintained that enacting Prohibition and shutting down saloons represented a significant loss of resources available to immigrant communities through their respective ethnic saloons. Lewis highlighted the element of ethnicity in the Prohibition debate, claiming that the Prohibition campaign was an attempt to impose white,

²⁷ Jack S. Blocker, Jr., *American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), xv.

²⁸ Thomas R. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998), xi.

Anglo-Saxon Protestant values on immigrants.²⁹ Overall, his study focused on the cultural context of Prohibition voting. While Alfred McClung Lee's study recognized that during World War I anti-German war sentiments identified breweries as the enemy, he focused on the different socio-economic groups and their interest in seeing Prohibition succeed. In his view, the successful collaboration of these groups made it possible for the ASL to effectively eliminate the saloon as an essential meeting place for ethnic communities.³⁰ Jon M. Kingsdale especially took a closer look at the saloon as a networking place and its social functions for the urban immigrant working class. He argued that the saloon was central to immigrant life and helped ethnic communities retain their identities.³¹ Thus, to Anglo-American Progressives the saloon threatened to prevent the assimilation of immigrants into American society. Ron Rothbart expanded on Lee and Kingsdale's ideas, highlighting the saloon's role as a stepping-stone to the American dream for many eastern European immigrants. Rothbart argued that especially immigrant saloon owners served as a middleman to help immigrants navigate their new environment and claimed that the ethnic and cultural familiarity of the saloon owner helped newly arrived immigrants to become assimilated into American society.³² Rothbart's work represented a crucial point to highlight the dual functions of the immigrant saloon – a place to socialize with fellow countrymen but also a place that helped immigrants to navigate through American society.

29 Michael Lewis, "Access to Saloons, Wet Voter Turnout, and Statewide Prohibition Referenda, 1907-1919," *Social Science History* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 376.

30 Alfred McClung Lee, "Techniques of Social Reform: An Analysis of the New Prohibition Drive," *American Sociological Review* 9, no. 1 (Feb. 1944): 67.

31 Jon M. Kingsdale, "The 'Poor Man's Club': Social Functions of the Urban Working-Class Saloon," *American Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Oct. 1973): 487-488.

32 Ron Rothbart, "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise," *The International Migration Review* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 332-333.

While these studies provide a detailed analysis of the Prohibition movement and saloon functions and its culture, they fall short in exploring the impact of World War I and anti-German sentiments on the saloon as a social institution. The aforementioned scholars discussed the importance of the saloon to the immigrant community in a general setting. The issue of German-Americans and the precarious position they held by being not only successful businessmen in the beer brewing industry but also average citizens that were simultaneously labeled unpatriotic and disloyal during World War I needs further research. Similarly, while Prohibition was anti-immigrant, the various ethnic communities reacted differently to the legislation. A more nuanced look even within an ethnic community is needed. Additionally, the differences in the drinking venues, particularly the saloon versus the beer garden, need to be considered to gain a more subtle understanding of Prohibitionists' opposition to both. Both venues functioned as a form of community center for immigrants, albeit attracting a different clientele. The saloon was male-dominated and catered to working-class urban immigrants. It was a place where men could retreat after their workday and connect with fellow countrymen, finding familiarity in a new world. Women and children were markedly absent. Unlike the decidedly male, working-class saloon environment, beer gardens represented a meeting place for the entire family. Beer gardens were mainly associated with German-Americans (although they were open to everyone, regardless of ethnicity or gender) and provided a place where they could celebrate and maintain their traditions, especially the conviviality of social drinking, in an inclusive family-friendly atmosphere. Over the past two decades, two works have stood out that explored the relationship between cultural traditions of German-Americans and the role alcohol played in shaping German-American ethnic identity.

Kathleen Neils Conzen paid close attention to German-American cultural traditions as important markers of ethnic identity. She agreed in part with Higham that Germans were welcomed and admired by Anglo-Americans, but at the same time Anglo-Americans were suspicious of German-American cultural traditions, particularly the alcohol-infused public conviviality. Conzen stressed how this sociability remained a core expression of German-American ethnicity, and how important it was for them to preserve this cultural aspect.³³ Conzen argued compellingly and highlighted the importance of the beer gardens to German-American culture. While she credited Prohibition with the demise of German-American public drinking culture, she did not explore further how anti-German sentiments during the war influenced the disappearance of this once crucial marker of German-American identity.

German historian Sabine Meyer expanded on Conzen's idea of a specific German-American social drinking culture. Similar to Rippley, who claimed that the outbreak of World War I brought German-Americans together, Meyer argued that the attacks of the temperance movement brought German-Americans together in an attempt to create a cohesive identity.³⁴ In her view, traditional communal celebrations and sociability defined German-American ethnicity. Alcohol became an essential marker of German-American ethnic identity. Thus, German-Americans were unwilling to make compromises concerning their cultural traditions – their drinking culture tied them to their ethnic identity. Once alcohol was banned from the public sphere, German-American cultural traditions were also relegated to the private home. Both Conzen and Meyer provided a crucial update to the historiography of Prohibition and ethnicity by examining the role alcohol played in German-

33 Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Germans in Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2003), 12, 57-61.

34 Sabine Meyer, *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2015),

American cultural traditions and identity. Yet, both left out World War I and anti-German propaganda that helped push Prohibition across the national finish line. While both Conzen and Meyer acknowledged that social drinking represented a crucial characteristic in defining German-American identity, they fell short in examining the role anti-German war propaganda played.

The aforementioned studies represent an impressive variety of the historiography of anti-German World War I propaganda and Prohibition over the past half-century. However, it is surprising that very few of them made the connection between World War I anti-German sentiments and Prohibition, and that few of them explored the questions of the relationship between anti-German sentiments and Prohibition. Anti-German war propaganda helped to paint the picture of the disloyal and treacherous “Hun” who needed to be defeated in the trenches of eastern France. The historiography of World War I propaganda showed that the war was also fought on the home front. Thus, the “Hun,” disguised as millions of German-Americans, needed to be defeated on the home front as well. Specifically, this meant fighting German-American cultural traditions. Prevailing anti-German sentiments from World War I were a significant influence on Prohibition and helped extinguish German-American cultural traditions. The following pages provide an analysis and discussion which demonstrate how anti-German war propaganda influenced Prohibition and how it impacted German-American communities.

Chapter I

Prohibition – Fighting the Menace of Immigration

*“And the worst of all our German enemies, the most treacherous, the most menacing, are Pabst, Schlitz, Blatz, and Miller.”*³⁵

Historians have long acknowledged that Prohibitionists targeted particular immigrants and their drinking culture. However, Prohibitionists did not only single out the so-called new immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, they also targeted the social customs and traditions of well-established ethnic communities, such as German-Americans. German-Americans represented a unique challenge for Prohibition supporters. On the one side, German-Americans were generally considered one of the most reputable immigrant groups that ranked high in desirable traits, while on the other hand their public display of social customs that were antithetical to middle-class Anglo-Saxon Protestant values put them closer to the less-desirable category.³⁶ German-Americans dominated the US beer brewing industry, had a significant stake in the saloon business and generally were known to enjoy the conviviality of social drinking. Thus, German-Americans represented both sides of the liquor traffic; they were producers and consumers. To bring German-Americans in line with white middle-class American ideals and values, Prohibitionists aimed to extinguish a vital social element of German culture and heritage – the beer garden. Of course, it was not just German immigrants whose drinking culture went against Anglo-American values, although the influx of German immigrants in the 1850s altered the American beer brewing industry. This chapter takes a closer look at the conflict between German-American drinking customs and

³⁵ John Strange, former Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, as quoted in “Pabst Charge Is Filed,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, February 13, 1918, 6.

³⁶ John Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 25, 196; Russell A. Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 2; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 60.

Prohibitionists and explains how this once preferred immigrant group became the prime target of Prohibitionists. It also examines the role German-American organizations like the United States Brewers' Association (USBA) and the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) played in the Prohibition battle.

From Temperance to Prohibition

Prohibition has been described as America's noble but failed experiment of social engineering. Prohibition proponents long attributed society's ills to the consumption of alcohol. While various temperance and prohibition movements had been active since the early 1800s, the campaign to impose national Prohibition gathered speed during the first decade of the twentieth century, especially with the outbreak of World War I. By 1914, fourteen states had adopted Prohibition in some form.³⁷ The outbreak of the war accelerated the Prohibition campaign and gave the national objective new impetus. Just two years later, the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) boasted that half of the states were “dry” (Figure 1). By the time the US entered the war in 1917, twenty-seven states had passed and enacted some form of Prohibition legislation.³⁸ As the 1916 map below shows, states with larger urban areas in the Midwest (Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, parts of Michigan) as well as the Northeast (Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and the New England states) remained “wet.” These states were also home to large number of immigrants. States that had a large concentration of German immigrants also remained mostly “wet,” particularly in the Midwest, where the large brewing centers were located. While local and state Prohibition

³⁷ “Prohibition States – History,” *The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing With Prohibition* (Cincinnati, OH: National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association of America, 1917), 8.

³⁸ “Prohibition States – History,” *The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing With Prohibition* (Cincinnati, OH: The Publicity Department of the National Association of Distillers and Wholesale Dealers, 1918), 7.

were options, states with a high percentage of German immigrants generally did not enact wide-reaching Prohibition laws aside from Sunday restrictions. This section provides an overview of the evolution of the temperance and prohibition movements to understand the public drinking environment German immigrants were facing.

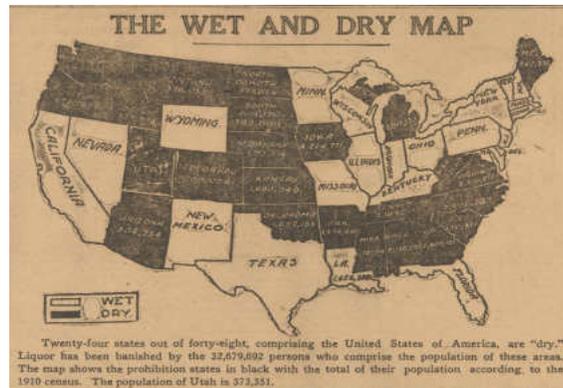


Fig. 1 *The Wet and Dry Map* ³⁹

While some of the states had enacted various forms of Prohibition before World War I, once the US entered into the war the federal government too sought legislative restrictions on the production of alcohol. In August 1917, the Food and Fuel Control Act prohibited the use of foodstuffs (mainly grain and corn) in the production of liquor. Four months later, the ASL achieved a major milestone when Congress passed the Prohibition Resolution as the Eighteenth Amendment and sent it to the states for ratification. In January 1918, President Wilson declared a partial Prohibition to conserve grain for the war effort that limited the alcohol content of beer to 2.75 percent alcohol. In addition, beer production was limited to 70 percent of the previous year's production. In September 1918, the President issued a ban on the wartime production of beer. One week after the armistice, Congress passed the temporary

³⁹ *The Wet and Dry Map*, 1916, PJ Mode Collection of Persuasive Cartography, Cornell University Library Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, <https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:19343208>.

Wartime Prohibition Act, which banned the sale of alcoholic beverages with an alcohol content of greater than 1.28 percent, effective July 1, 1919. On December 1, 1918, the manufacturing of beer was prohibited. Thus, by the time the Eighteenth Amendment went into effect on January 16, 1920, the US had already been under some form of national Prohibition for the past two-and-a-half years.

From the beginning of the American Republic to the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, the various temperance and prohibition movements underwent several changes in their goals, tactics, and supporters. During the early decades, reformers focused on moral suasion, hoping to convince people to avoid drunkenness and persuade individual “sinners” to abstain from distilled beverages.⁴⁰ However, the changing fabric of American society brought on by immigration, industrialization, and urbanization during the nineteenth century required a different approach to the intemperance issue. Reformers realized that moral suasion was not enough to stop the problems brought on by alcohol consumption. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth century they began to look to local and state governments and used the coercive power of the state to pass restrictions on the liquor traffic.⁴¹

Generally, immigrants’ drinking habits were somewhat in line with those of colonial America and the early American Republic. Late eighteenth to early nineteenth-century consumption of alcohol can be summed up with “virtually everyone drank virtually all the time.”⁴² At the time, alcohol was not only considered essential to one’s diet, but it was even

⁴⁰ Jack S. Blocker, Jr., *American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), xv; H. Paul Thompson, Jr. “Temperance and Prohibition,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, May 2017, 1.

⁴¹ Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 2015), 8.

⁴² Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 3.

more so the safe alternative as access to clean drinking water was not readily available. Beer and cider were homemade and the most prominent beverages consumed during family meals. It was customary for farmers and craftsmen to supply their workers with a daily ration of rum or whiskey.⁴³ Since young male workers either continued living at home or with their master, any problems of drunkenness were generally contained in the local community. Thus, the consumption of alcohol took place in a clearly defined social context and played a vital role in social gatherings within the family, the workplace, and public events. The colonial role of alcohol was similar to the drinking customs of German immigrants. While alcohol was also seen as a “good creature provided by God for mankind’s benefit,” early reformers like Benjamin Rush were convinced that distilled liquor had no benefit and was thus unnecessary.⁴⁴ Instead, Rush advocated for healthy substitutes such as cider, wine, and beer.

A marked change in alcohol consumption patterns started to appear with the beginnings of industrialization and urbanization during the 1820s and 1830s. The social context of alcohol consumption was disrupted by the gradual dissolution of the traditional patterns and structures of rural America. Young males moved to the cities to become part of the fledging industrialized economy. This in turn changed the way alcohol was consumed. Instead of drinking homebrewed beer and cider, male workers now consumed alcohol in taverns and saloons, thus making drinking and drunkenness a much more public event without the social constraints of the rural community. In addition, clergymen started to get involved, declaring alcohol as a dangerous tool of the devil instead of a gift from God that

43 Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 4-5; Thompson, “Temperance and Prohibition,” 2.

44 Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 7; James R. Rohrer, “The Origins of the Temperance Movement: A Reinterpretation,” *Journal of American Studies* 24, no. 2 (Aug., 1990), 228.

threatened to destroy the country's covenant with God.⁴⁵ Some of the early temperance movements no longer regarded cider, wine, and beer as an acceptable substitute for distilled liquor and called for complete abstinence and prohibition of any alcohol. Reformers still had a distinctly religious aspect and advocated for individual abstinence and moral suasion. However, by the 1850s reformers argued that individual abstinence alone was insufficient to end the problems associated with alcohol, and they looked toward local and state governments to control the liquor trade.⁴⁶

An additional problem (at least in the eyes of the temperance movement) that reformers of the 1850s faced was the influx of Irish and German immigrants to the cities. These immigrants brought their alcohol culture with them. In the case of the Germans, this meant introducing America to their beer culture. The term German is used here as an overarching term to identify the German-speaking immigrant population that arrived in the US before the creation of the German Empire in 1871. While these immigrants came from different regions in Germany (Bavaria, Hesse, Prussia, Rhineland, Palatinate, and Swabia to name the most prominent ones) and foremost identified as citizens of these states or principalities, they did share a common language that identified them as Germans, particularly to Americans. The diversity of German immigrants and their regional differences will be discussed in greater detail in the next section. These immigrants reintroduced the consumption of alcohol in a social public setting to American society. Wine and beer played a central role in the social life and cultural traditions of most immigrants.⁴⁷

45 Rohrer, "The Origins of the Temperance Movement," 229.

46 McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 14.

47 Thompson, "Temperance and Prohibition," 16.

Saloons were popular among the male urban working class as they served beer, but distilled liquor was also fairly inexpensive. German-American saloonkeepers actually had to adapt to the US saloon culture, which had evolved from colonial taverns and were an almost exclusively male environment.⁴⁸ German immigrants from different German regions brought with them a different model for public alcohol consumption – the beer garden. Beer gardens started to appear as a novelty in nineteenth century America since they promoted drinking in public as a family affair. These venues attracted large numbers of German immigrants and their families, especially on weekends, and clashed with the predominant Anglo-Protestant ideas of Sunday activities.⁴⁹ Reformers confronted these new issues by calling for local and state governments to control the liquor trade. From the 1850s on, temperance reformers introduced local and state options, high licensing fees for saloons, and Sunday closing laws, thus shifting from moral suasion to coercive government power.⁵⁰ Reformers also started to specifically target the liquor industry and the saloons. This in turn was perceived as class warfare, as most reformers were white middle-class Anglo-Americans trying to impose their ideal of a healthy society on predominantly working-class male immigrants.

The makeup of the temperance and prohibition movements also changed. While it was a markedly religious movement dominated by men in the early decades, by the end of the Civil War the movement became more secular. White middle-class women saw the temperance movement as an ideal place to stake out their place in the public sphere.

Although outside the scope of this thesis, it is crucial to briefly point out the role women

48 Mark Benbow, "German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry," in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 2, edited by William J. Hausman. German Historical Institute. Last modified February 01, 2017. <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=284>.

49 Benbow, "German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry."

50 Blocker, *The American Temperance Movements*, 53-55.

played in the Prohibition movement as well as Prohibition's more positive aspects. It attracted other temperance movements, particularly the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), thus offering a wider public stage for women to voice their concerns about alcohol and its effects on the family and society. For example, feminists, who saw domestic violence as one of the worst scourges facing society, argued that limiting alcohol use could curb domestic abuse. They justified their involvement not only because women were victims of male drinking but also as moral agents of the family and thus the nation in general.⁵¹ These supporters addressed valid concerns that were not unfounded and thus were able to not only attract a wider audience but were also hoping that the Prohibition movement would advance their cause.

While reformers achieved some success with local and state options, as well as some states passing constitutional Prohibition, they also acknowledged the limitations to leaving the alcohol issue with the individual states. In addition, the Prohibition movement consisted of diverse and fragmented organizations across the nation, thus making a united, nationwide organization impossible. Even prominent groups like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Prohibition Party failed to agree on the most effective strategy to implement Prohibition. Many of the reformers' movements also pursued other issues in addition to Prohibition, thus making a unified, combined campaign impossible.

It was not until the emergence of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) in 1893 that a strong, one-issue organization emerged. By solely focusing on Prohibition, the ASL's single-issue campaign offered a unifying platform to these diverse groups and was able to focus and advance its goal. The ASL platform also resonated with some middle-class Progressives in

⁵¹ Blocker, *The American Temperance Movements*, 76-83; McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*, 15; Thompson, "Temperance and Prohibition," 13.

the early twentieth century who were keen on using the power of state and federal governments to implement social reforms. Many Progressives believed that alcohol contributed to major social problems. Thus, the campaign to remove the temptation of alcohol was an important aspect in the Progressives' goal to reshape adult behavior for the betterment of society.⁵² By the first decade of the twentieth century, Prohibition reformers represented a successful coalition of religious, moral suasion and coercive power of the state that set out to wage battle against the liquor traffic.⁵³ For the ASL, alcohol and the alcohol industry were seen as the root of all evil.

Prohibitionists hoped that without intoxicating spirits America would once again become the shining city on the hill. The Eighteenth Amendment intended to impose the moral standards of a minority on the majority of the population. Prohibition supporters also hoped that the amendment would accelerate the Americanization of even established immigrant groups like German-Americans.

Diversity of German Immigrants

German immigration to the US increased drastically during the last half of the nineteenth century, with the vast majority of Germans leaving for the US between 1850 and 1890. Although the period between 1861 and 1880 saw a decrease in German immigration over the previous decade (which can be attributed to better economic conditions after the unification of Germany in 1871, as well as general social improvements for the working class), one could argue that these forty years represented a continuous wave of German

⁵² Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 136-139.

⁵³ McGerr, *The War on Alcohol*, 8-13.

immigration. Two decades stand out where German immigration reached its peak during the nineteenth century. Between 1851 and 1860, 951,667 Germans immigrated, largely due to the failed 1848/49 revolution. This represented an increase of over 200 percent from the previous decade.⁵⁴ While Germans hailed from all parts of the country, a significant number during this emigration wave came from southwestern Germany (Palatine region, Rhineland, Swabia, Bavaria) and Hesse, which experienced a greater amount of political unrest. The second wave occurred two decades later, with almost 1.5 million Germans leaving their home country between 1881 and 1890.⁵⁵ The latter peak was due primarily to restrictive legislation aimed at Liberals, Socialists, and Catholics by the government of the new united German Empire, as well as the exodus of Germans from Russia.

Beginning with the last decade of the nineteenth century, German immigration decreased rather rapidly. Throughout the 1890s, a little more than half a million Germans (or about 12 percent of total immigrants) immigrated to the US. This number dropped to 341,498 between 1901 and 1910 and represented just four percent of total immigration.⁵⁶ While Germans represented about 30 percent of the total immigration population between 1850 and 1890, the percentage with respect to the total US population was relatively small. During the same period, about 4 percent of the total US population was born in Germany. Although the percentage of Americans with German backgrounds was difficult to gauge, as late as the 1910 US Census, 9 percent of the American population had either been born in Germany or

⁵⁴ "Table 3. German Immigration since 1820," US Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington D.C., 1975), 15.

⁵⁵ "Series B 304-330. Immigration – Immigrants by Country: 1820 to 1945," US Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States 1789 – 1945*, (Washington D.C., 1949), 33-34.

⁵⁶ "Series B 304-330. Immigration – Immigrants by Country: 1820 to 1945," US Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States 1789 – 1945*, (Washington D.C., 1949), 33.

claimed at least one German parent.⁵⁷ Thus, it would be safe to assume that the number of Americans with some degree of German heritage was higher than officially tallied by the US Census. Similarly, according to the 1910 Census, 1,869,590 Germans claimed to have “mixed parentage,” meaning that one of the parent was “native.” The term native was used by the US Census Bureau in this context to identify white Americans born in the US.⁵⁸ Compared with the total number of German immigrants in the 1910 Census, almost a quarter of them had one American (“native-born”) parent. While these numbers do not reveal the ethnic background of the natural-born American parent, one can reasonably assume that marriages between Germans and non-Germans did occur.

Although exact numbers of German-American communities were not available, the “Density of Distribution of the Natives of the Germanic Nations: 1890” map in the *Statistical Atlas of the United States* offered some information to visualize where Germans settled (Figure 2). While there was a high percentage of Germans who settled in large cities on the East Coast, a far greater number settled in the upper Midwest, namely around the Great Lakes region, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, parts of Minnesota, and the Great Plains. German immigrants to the US generally followed a pattern of staying with family or with people from their hometown area. As they moved across the US, they sought out places with familiar culture and traditions and tried to recreate versions of their old hometown associations and clubs.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States – Population 1910*, Vol I, “Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock” (Washington, D.C., 1913), 875-880.

⁵⁸ The usage of the terms “native stock” and native-born” throughout this thesis is to point out that white Anglo-Saxon Protestants in particular and white Americans of British heritage in general used this classification to identify themselves as Americans who were born in the US. This thesis uses these terms in this context and is fully aware that historically the only “native stock” in the US are Native people.

⁵⁹ Thomas Lekan, “German Landscape: Local Promotion of the Heimat Abroad,” in *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of*

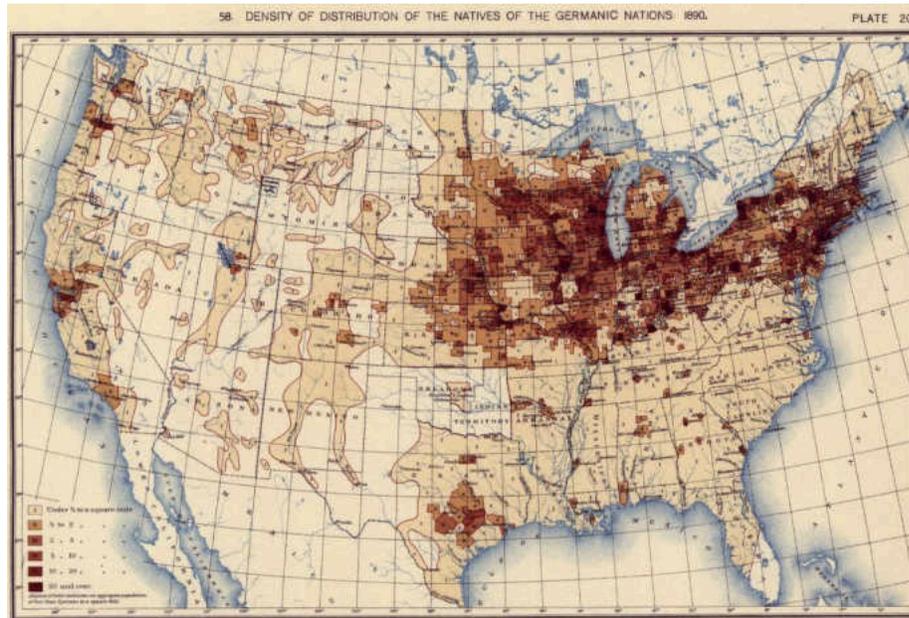


Fig. 2 *Density of Distribution of the Natives of the Germanic Nations*⁶⁰

Generally, German immigrants enjoyed preferred status from both immigration officials and the American public. Especially the ones coming after the 1848/49 revolution were regarded as well educated, industrious, and thrifty – important traits for the westward expansion of the US.⁶¹ Many of them left Germany between 1840 and 1860, hoping to find better socio-economic conditions across the Atlantic. In particular, the educated and skilled German immigrants looked to America as a beacon of hope after the failed March Revolution of 1848. The dissatisfaction with the German political system and the knowledge that they would face persecution for their liberal political convictions sped up their decision to leave the old country. These immigrants differed from earlier, colonial German immigrants in their

Germanness, ed. Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 144.

⁶⁰ *Density of Distribution of the Natives of the Germanic Nations: 1890, Statistical Atlas of the United States*, Department of the Interior, Census Office (Washington, D.C.), 1898.

⁶¹ William J. Hausman, "Introduction, Volume 2: The Emergence of an Industrial Nation," in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 2, edited by William J. Hausman, German Historical Institute, <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=276>; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 59.

educational levels and occupations. The majority of German immigrants through the early nineteenth century were farmers and artisans.⁶² While later immigration waves still included these occupations, the majority of German immigrants during the 1840s and 1860s differed mainly in their educational level. Many of the male immigrants had received apprenticeship training in Germany as skilled laborers, artisans, and office clerks. Some were entrepreneurs hoping to achieve economic freedom. German immigrants during the 1850s comprised a greater number of educated and politically active Germans than previous groups.⁶³ Future beer brewing magnates like Adolphus Busch, Joseph Schlitz, August Schell, Phillip Best, and Frederick Pabst to name just a few, all immigrated to the US between 1848 and 1857.⁶⁴

Likewise, German immigrants during the late nineteenth century were generally well educated and either engaged in skilled trades as craftsmen and shopkeepers or pursued farming.⁶⁵ While German immigrants moved westwards for various reasons, the ability to obtain farmland was still important. By 1880, about a quarter of German immigrants were farmers and planters, but skilled labor and the grocery trades were also in the top ten occupations for Germans.⁶⁶ Perhaps not surprisingly, German immigrants concentrated in various occupations in the alcohol industry. Sixty-three percent of men employed as brewers

62 James M. Bergquist, "German Communities in American Cities: An Interpretation of the Nineteenth-Century Experience," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 4, no. 1 (Fall, 1984): 11; La Vern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976), 28, 40-43.

63 Bergquist, "German Communities in American Cities," 12; Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 51.

64 *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, Vol. 2, German Historical Institute, <https://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/volume.php?rec=2>; Amy Mittelman, *Brewing Battles: A History of American Beer* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008); Wisconsin Historical Society, <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/>.

65 Sabine Meyer, *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota*, 38; Günter Moltmann, "The Pattern of German Emigration to the United States in the Nineteenth Century," in *America and the Germans*, Vol I, eds. Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 14.

66 Hausman, "Introduction, Volume 2: The Emergence of an Industrial Nation."

and maltsters were Germans, and Germans constituted 70 percent of men employed in the beverage industry.⁶⁷

Not all Americans welcomed the Germans or saw them as a positive addition to American society. Some of the praised German industriousness was not welcomed when it pertained to the beer brewing industry. Here, opponents of immigration were quick to point out, “While most Germans are industrious and frugal, others resort to beer or liquor selling, and kindred occupations.”⁶⁸ Some Americans, particularly Prohibitionists, did not regard certain occupations dominated by German immigrants as beneficial to American society, nor did they think Germans were willing to give up some of their customs and integrate into Anglo-American society.

By 1910, over 90 percent of the German-born in the US had taken out their first papers.⁶⁹ While they were officially now US citizens this did not mean that they abandoned their customs and traditions or their cultural heritage. When they left Germany, they did not simply leave their traditions. Rather their German lifestyle immigrated to the US to some extent. This was especially true for German immigrants who came during the 1850s. This educated class of German immigrants brought with them a more refined German culture in the form of art, literature, and music and established a plethora of German institutions. Schools, newspapers, but also social organizations that promoted German-style leisure activities started to appear in greater numbers in the 1860s. It is during that time that a more prominent and public “Germanness” became visible through the creation of various German

⁶⁷ Hausman, “Introduction, Volume 2: The Emergence of an Industrial Nation.”; Walter Kamphoefner, “The German Component to American Industrialization,” in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 2, ed. William J. Hausman, German Historical Institute, last modified July 30, 2015, accessed July 2, 2019, <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=189>.

⁶⁸ Hausman, “Introduction, Volume 2: The Emergence of an Industrial Nation.”

⁶⁹ Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 180.

clubs like singing, gymnastics, and theater clubs and their accompanying public festivities and celebrations.⁷⁰

Like any other immigrant community, German-Americans were not a homogenous group. However, there were marked differences in the background of the German immigrants that went beyond the traditional class and education separation. While other immigrant groups could be relied upon as an ethnic voting bloc, German-Americans were too fragmented and split along lines of class, religion, and regional heritage.⁷¹ Since the majority of German immigrants left the old country decades before a united German Empire was established, they lacked a mutual German identity. These immigrants identified with the state or region they were from in Germany, rather than with the abstract idea of a united state of Germany.⁷² These differences were noticeable not only in vastly different dialects but also in the observation of different religious holidays depending on one's confession as well as different regional customs and celebrations. Thus, German-Americans did not share a common "German" identity but were fragmented into regional differences. These differences were also evident in the establishment of German-American social clubs, as each group sought to create its own spheres of socializing with each other. The plethora of German organizations and associations created by secular clubs and the different religious denominations were competing with each other instead of trying to find a common

70 Bergquist, "German Communities in American Cities," 12-5; Heike Bungert, "The Singing Festivals of German Americans, 1849-1914," *American Music* 34, no. 2, Music in Four Distinct American Communities (Summer 2016): 142-144; Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 129-134.

71 Jason Todd Baker, "Pulitzer, Preetorius, and the German American Identity Project of the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis," in *German Diasporic Experiences: Identity, Migration, and Loss*, ed. Mathias Schulze, James M. Skidmore, David G. John, et al. (Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 99; Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock*, 6-8.

72 Bergquist, "German Communities in American Cities," 15; Lekan, "German Landscape: Local Promotion of the Heimat Abroad," 144, 148.

denominator to attract and create a more unified German-American community.⁷³ While German-Americans could not unite around their religious and regional differences, they enjoyed their active club life and tried to maintain and preserve their respective traditions.

Furthermore, religious differences revealed strong divisions among the German-American community. While it was easier for German-Americans to establish their own communities separated by religion in rural areas in the Midwest, large cities, too showed signs of voluntary segregation. German Catholics in cities had little to no contact with other German-Americans but often shared churches with the Irish. Through their shared faith they also shared political convictions to a degree, particularly on issues concerning the working-class.⁷⁴ Thus, German Catholics were united by a common faith and felt more affinity for the Irish than they did towards fellow Germans of different religious beliefs. Similarly, German Protestants (or Lutherans) were isolating themselves from the rest of German-Americans and organized in autonomous congregations.⁷⁵ German Lutherans also felt some affinity to Protestant Anglo-Americans, as they found common ground in a shared work ethic. Like the Catholics, German Lutherans opposed the influence of secular German associations and started their own organizations. Frederick Luebke asserted that the attitudes and values of German-Americans “were much more closely related to religious belief than they were to language, place of birth, or economic status.”⁷⁶ However, the religious denomination was also often tied to a region, thus both factors combined intensified the differences and prevented German-Americans from creating a community with a unified ethnic identity based on a shared heritage. In that sense, religious and class divisions that shaped individual

73 Bergquist, “German Communities in American Cities,” 14-16.

74 Baker, “Pulitzer, Preetorius, and the German American Identity Project of the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis,” 99.

75 Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 37; Bergquist, “German Communities in American Cities,” 14.

76 Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 34.

and group identities were more meaningful than any shared “Germanness.” It was difficult for these groups to overcome their differences and unite behind a common goal or identity-

German Drinking Culture as a Shared Ethnic Identity

Religion, regional backgrounds, and social class all played crucial parts in facilitating the development of ethnic identity in the German-American communities. Yet, despite their diversity, German-Americans were trying to establish a common “Germanness” to maintain their traditions. This section examines how German-Americans hoped to create this “unified German” identity they could subscribe to without giving up their individual identities that set them apart from other German-Americans. At the same time, German-Americans tried to answer what this “Germanness” should look like and what defined German-American identity as being different from other ethnicities.

The diversity of German-American communities and their often segregated social life did not mean that they did not have any contact with other Germans. The diversity of German clubs and social life actually helped to bring German-Americans together. For example, German-American singing festivals attracted choirs from across the state, as did shooting clubs and gymnastic competitions.⁷⁷ These meetings generally involved large public celebrations with German food and drink where German-Americans from different social, religious, and regional backgrounds would come together and reminisce about the old country. Celebrations like these helped to bridge the differences between the diverse German-American communities. In addition, the emergence of beer gardens in the 1850s, particularly in urban areas, also aided in the creation of a common German identity. The

⁷⁷ Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 34; Bungert, “The Singing Festivals of German Americans, 1849-1914,” 141; Lekan, “German Landscape: Local Promotion of the Heimat Abroad,” 148-150.

relationship between brewers and German-American drinking traditions, as well as the importance of the cultural aspect of German-American communal drinking customs deserves to be explored in greater detail.

The drastic increase in German immigration from the 1850s through the 1880s also brought public drinking customs that were similar to those of colonial America.⁷⁸ In that regard, German immigrants during the 1850s re-introduced Americans to their colonial alcohol culture, particularly with German beer garden culture. However, by the 1850s local options that prohibited the sale of alcohol on Sundays were already in place in some states, thus clashing with German drinking customs. If German-Americans were fragmented by religious and regional differences, they were surprisingly united by a shared conviction for their Sunday recreational customs.⁷⁹ Despite their differences, Germans generally brought with them a love of social get-togethers in an outdoor setting. Although it seemed antithetical to their perceived nature and work ethic, Germans possessed a certain *joie de vivre*s that showed itself in public social conviviality, called *Gemütlichkeit*.

For German-Americans, Sunday was regarded as a day of public enjoyment and recreation, which meant social activities, meeting with friends and family in public, attending festivities put on by clubs and associations, as well as a visit to the beer garden after church. This is not to say that Anglo-Americans generally stayed at home on Sunday. Of course, they participated in family get-togethers on Sunday, a picnic in the park, or attending social functions. However, the German custom of visiting the public beer garden stood in opposition to the Anglo-American tradition of Sunday as a day of participating in religious

⁷⁸ Blocker, *American Temperance Movement*, 34, 109.

⁷⁹ Luke Ritter, "Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860," *Missouri Historical Review* 17, no. 1 (2012): 35-36.

activities and a general abstinence from public diversions of any kind.⁸⁰ While some cities were more lenient with the enforcement of Sunday laws than others, some beer brewing companies offered German-Americans an alternative to go about their tradition of socializing publicly by opening beer gardens outside urban areas. This blatant disregard of existing laws created conflict not just with Anglo-Americans who supported Prohibition. German-Americans' general distaste for, as well as defiance of, the Sunday laws highlighted the cultural differences between German-Americans and Anglo-Americans.

Interestingly, the concept of prohibiting the sale of alcohol on Sunday was not new to German-Americans. According to some historians, most Germans came from areas in Germany that had some form of Sunday regulation or restriction on alcohol, mostly prohibiting the sale of alcohol during church service times.⁸¹ What surprised many German-Americans was the strictness and the enforcement attitudes of the various US Sunday laws. This is not to say that all German-Americans were opposed to some form of alcohol regulation either. Some German Protestants viewed themselves in the tradition of "old stock" Anglo-Americans, sharing a protestant work ethic, and a general outlook on life.⁸² Thus, it would not be too speculative to assume that some German Protestants were in favor of temperance or Prohibition. Similarly, some German Catholics broke with their Irish Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, when he advocated for Prohibition, while others opted to remain members of the parish.⁸³ While some German clergy of both denominations supported Sunday laws, such support was not widespread or long lasting.

80 Benbow, "German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry;" Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 25; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 60; Ritter, "Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860," 24.

81 Ritter, "Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860," 26-28.

82 Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock*, 6.

83 Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 109.

At the same time, German temperance advocates in Germany and the US condemned public drunkenness and focused on moderation but rarely rejected drinking entirely or called for the prohibition of alcohol.⁸⁴ Thanks to the work of the temperance and prohibition movements, the darker side of alcohol and its effects on society were known, and the negative aspects of alcohol abuse cannot be underestimated. Without a doubt, domestic abuse, violence, or loss of job and income were only a few of the negative effects alcohol abuse had on society in general and affected families in particular. Generally speaking though, German-Americans viewed alcohol use in a more relaxed manner and highlighted its social conviviality more so than its negative aspects. This social conviviality on Sundays represented a traditional German Sunday custom that encompassed Germans from all walks of life. German drinking culture, the social conviviality of public drinking, was one aspect of a common German tradition that German-Americans were not willing to give up.

Drinking alcohol in the company of family and friends, either in public or at home, also defined *Gemütlichkeit*. Kathleen Neils Conzen accurately noted that this social conviviality or sociability “remained the core expression of German-American ethnicity,” in part because German immigrants after 1848 viewed American society more negatively and believed that German culture held much that was praiseworthy.⁸⁵ For German-Americans, these communal celebrations and the social conviviality of the beer garden played an important role in defining their ethnicity. In *We Are What We Drink*, Sabine Meyer took this a step further by emphasizing that “For German immigrants, their taverns and beer gardens were an integral part of their culture, an essential feature of their ethnic identity, and

84 Ritter, “Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860,” 27.

85 Kathleen Neils Conzen, “German-Americans and the Invention of Ethnicity, in *America and the Germans*, Vol I, eds. Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 137; Kathleen Neil Conzen, *Germans in Minnesota*, 61.

maintained a certain unity among this otherwise diverse ethnic group.”⁸⁶ Communal drinking of alcohol not only brought Germans from different religious, regional, social, and economic backgrounds together, but the communal activity of sharing alcohol created and defined a shared German-American ethnic identity which bound them together regardless of their differences.

Similar to American taverns and saloons, German tavern culture served an important social function as a meeting place. Like their American counterpart, German taverns provided a public meeting place where men would gather to discuss politics and work, socialize, and talk about news around town. It was customary for German men to stop at the tavern on Sunday after church service for a leisurely visit. In addition, German taverns also served as a public venue where German families would celebrate special occasions, often religious ones, like weddings, christenings, and funerals.⁸⁷ Thus, taverns in Germany were not just associated with drinking alcohol but served important social functions in a public sphere. Germans used taverns to interact with the community and create a sense of identity.

Beer gardens served a similar purpose, both in the US and in Germany. In the US, beer brewers often attached a beer garden to their breweries to create an outside area where families could relax, have a meal, listen to music, and meet friends. Generally, beer gardens were intended for families and served as a model to promote beer as the perfect form of temperate alcohol consumption.⁸⁸ Beer gardens presented an almost carnival-like atmosphere by offering more than just the obligatory benches and tables. As Carl Miller described it in “The Rise of the Beer Barons,” beer gardens offered far more than just beer and social

86 Sabine N. Meyer, *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota*, 40.

87 Ritter, “Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860,” 27-28.

88 Benbow, “German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry,” Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 52-55.

conviviality. Depending on the number of breweries in town, the beer brewers had to develop elaborate gardens to attract customers. The typical beer garden was usually open from sunup to sundown and offered music, dancing, sport, and leisure.⁸⁹ Some of the bigger breweries in larger cities established extravagant venues to compete with their rivals. For example, the Schlitz brewery beer garden in Milwaukee featured “a concert pavilion, a dance hall, a bowling alley and live performers” that created a circus-style resort atmosphere, while the Pabst brewery operated an entertainment park boasting “a 15,000-foot-long rollercoaster, Wild West shows, and live orchestras performed seven days a week.”⁹⁰ While these elaborate beer gardens offered exotic and extravagant attractions, venues in smaller towns resembled more the traditional German-style beer garden, where family entertainment consisted of live music and dancing.

Given that even the smaller beer gardens advertised themselves as an oasis in everyday life and provided a distraction from it, it is not surprising that the German-American idea of Sunday relaxation clashed with the predominant Anglo-American version of Sunday activities. Beer gardens offered something for everybody. Even non-alcohol drinking German-Americans could join in the social conviviality and enjoy the entertainment.⁹¹ Since beer gardens offered a wide variety of entertainment – one could visit to drink, but also listen to music, or sit with family and friends and enjoy a meal – they also attracted German-Americans from different backgrounds and brought them together. In that

⁸⁹ Carl Miller, “The Rise of the Beer Barons,” BeerHistory.com, 1999, accessed June 30, 2019, <http://www.beerhistory.com/library/holdings/beerbarons.shtml>.

⁹⁰ Miller, “The Rise of the Beer Barons,”; Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 52-55.

⁹¹ Researching the numbers of people visiting beer gardens proved to be difficult. While there are no exact numbers as to how many people visited beer gardens, judging by the diversity of them and the variety of entertainment they offered, one can infer that they were open to everyone – drinkers and non-drinkers alike, as well as men, women, and children – and catered to a wide variety of visitors. While distinctly German in tradition, beer gardens did not bar non-Germans from visiting. Rather, they hoped to be an inviting place for anybody, regardless of ethnicity, and bring German hospitality and customs to a diverse clientele.

regard, beer gardens served as a uniting force and created a sense of unity and common German tradition. Preserving their distinct social customs like the sociability of the beer garden helped German-Americans to create a common ethnic identity that also satisfied their cultural needs. The defense of beer and the cultural traditions it represented was also foremost a defense of German-American identity and a defense of Germans as a people in the broader context. Thus, beer gardens played an integral part in developing a German ethnic identity.

The Hyphenated Americans – The Americanizers’ Crucible

German-American leisure activities started to concern Prohibitionists and social reformers alike. The battle to change even the habits and cultures of so-called desirable immigrants like German-Americans presented a challenge for these reformers. While Americanizers generally focused on urban, working-class immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, German-Americans also needed to be Americanized because their social customs and traditions stood in conflict with the reformers’ ideas of Anglo-American values. Although German-Americans were considered productive members of American society, they did not escape the zeal of the Americanizers. Regardless of their country of origin, immigrants needed to shed their old-world customs and traditions, adopt the ideals and values of the white middle-class and become productive members of American society. For German-Americans that meant adopting the predominant Anglo-American meaning of Sunday as a day of church service and private family time instead of public celebrations in a beer garden.

Assimilation efforts permeated American society at all levels, and Americanizers were hugely influential during this period. The Americanization movement was not the work of a single, homogenous group. Rather, progressive social reformers, business people, civic associations, and government entities all offered different approaches on how to best assimilate the foreign population. Some of the most prominent progressive reformers of the time actively supported Americanization efforts and developed and implemented their own programs. While a detailed discussion of their programs is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to touch on the broader framework of the diverse Americanization efforts. Social reformers like Jane Addams and industrial business owners like Henry Ford alike showed a keen interest in assimilating the diverse immigrant population.

Addams firmly believed that immigrants brought value to American society. Settlement Houses like Addams' Hull House in Chicago were envisioned as places where people from various social classes and different cultural backgrounds could freely exchange their experiences in order to create a community that would help immigrants to assimilate into American society and break the cycle of dependency on their ethnic community.⁹² The blending of immigrant traditions with American culture was, therefore, an important tool to achieve this transformation. In contrast, Henry Ford created a mandatory Americanization program for his diverse immigrant workforce that set out to extinguish his workers' customs and traditions in order to efficiently run his company and also integrate them into American society. If an employee's improvements were not satisfactory, "it was within the province of the company to take away his share of the profits until such time as he could rehabilitate

⁹² Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age – Americans of the Progressive Era* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), Kindle, loc. 198; Rivka Shpak Lissak, *Pluralism & Progressives – Hull House and the New Immigrants, 1890-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 131.

himself.”⁹³ Ford’s program taught immigrants to develop white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon values and characteristics, which also meant abstaining from alcohol as Ford was a Prohibition supporter. While not all white Anglo-American Protestants were Prohibitionists, the transition from temperance to Prohibition among prominent reformers and the incorporation of Prohibition into Americanization programs were important points that broadened the appeal for both campaigns.

Although these Americanizers focused primarily on urban, working-class immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, German immigrants did not escape the reformers’ Americanization zeal. Even though German immigrants were considered highly desirable and more assimilable than the so-called new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, German beer production and consumption ran counter to the Americanizers’ anti-alcohol tendencies. In addition, large numbers of Catholic German immigrants arrived during the 1880s and moved to the cities in search of work, joining the masses of working-class laborers. While not all of them drank alcohol, the ones that did were undoubtedly targeted by the Prohibition supporters – as were alcohol-consuming Protestant Germans who also stood in contrast to the growing power of the Prohibition movement among the Anglo-Protestant reformers despite their shared faith.

While the assimilation methods and goals differed to an extent, Prohibitionists and Americanizers both aimed at creating a better American society. Changing the traditional customs and habits of immigrants was an apparent goal to achieve their vision of America as the shining city on the hill. Immigrants’ culture, their traditions, and practices were seen as alien, backward, and most importantly as un-American because they undermined and

⁹³ John R. Lee, “The So-Called Profit Sharing System in the Ford Plant,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 65, Personnel and Employment Problems in Industrial Management (May 1916): 302.

threatened the established social order. This included immigrants' drinking habits and their perceived irresponsible acceptance of drinking socially. The issues of ethnicity and cultural differences were clearly parts of the Prohibition debate, with Prohibitionists regarding immigrants as the undesired "others" in an "us-versus-them" battle over liquor.

Because of their drinking habits, immigrants coming from wine and beer drinking cultures were not only unassimilated but also considered "unassimilable."⁹⁴ Immigrant drinking habits and their opposition to the Eighteenth Amendment represented a threat to the lasting endurance of Prohibition and furthermore, in the eyes of the Prohibitionists, to the existence of the country. Naturalized immigrants did not fare much better. They were accused of not truly being assimilated since "They call themselves, not Americans, but German-Americans, Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Greek-Americans, Polish-Americans, or whatever other prefix may denote the nationality to which they cling."⁹⁵

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and himself an immigrant, also noted the anti-immigrant position of Prohibition. He viewed Prohibition as an effort to explicitly control the behavior of the urban working-class, which was predominantly made up of immigrants. Prohibition took away personal liberty for everybody – citizens and immigrants. Gompers argued that the Americanization programs failed to explain Prohibition to immigrants sufficiently. The foreign-born workers simply did not "understand why their drink has been taken away from them."⁹⁶ Likewise, even some of the pro-temperance German-American clergy did not comprehend "why Americans prohibited

94 Imogen B. Oakley, "The Prohibition Law and the Political Machine," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 109, Prohibition and Its Enforcement (Sep. 1923): 171.

95 Oakley, "The Prohibition Law and the Political Machine," 170.

96 Samuel Gompers, "Prohibition and the Immigrant Worker," (1919), in *The Politics of Moral Behavior*, ed. K. Austin Kerr (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1973), 125.

their Sunday drinking and socializing customs.”⁹⁷ Gompers went so far as to warn of political unrest among the workers should Prohibition be implemented, supporting the notion that prohibition could cause strikes, social unrest, and violence. In that sense, Prohibition represented a threat to American democracy.

Some reformers thought that immigrants in general opposed Prohibition legislation because the reasons for it had not been explained to them adequately.⁹⁸ In that regard, the various Americanization movements failed to successfully assimilate immigrants and instruct them in the white middle-class American way of life. Instead, Prohibitionists and Americanization supporters were quick to condemn immigrants for being ignorant and not conforming to American ideals and values. Supporters of Prohibition laid the blame squarely with the immigrants for not observing the Eighteenth Amendment. The immigrants’ resistance to Prohibition also validated longstanding prejudices Americanization supporters harbored against the foreign-born.

The perceived danger hyphenated Americans posed to American democracy was nothing new during the era of Prohibition. During the Great War native-born Americans questioned the loyalty of the so-called hyphenated Americans. German-Americans, in particular, were seen as disloyal and unpatriotic and experienced a witch-hunt that often ended in outbreaks of violence.⁹⁹ These sentiments did not just vanish after the end of the war. Rather, German leisure habits of drinking socially only validated and exacerbated the prevailing attitude that Germans truly were alien to the Anglo-American culture. Immigrant

⁹⁷ Ritter, “Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860,” 28.

⁹⁸ Constantine Panunzio, “The Foreign Born and Prohibition,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 163, Prohibition: A National Experiment (Sep. 1932): 149-150.

⁹⁹ For a brief overview of anti-German sentiments during the Great War see John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-1920* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990), and David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

drinking habits in general, and German-American beer brewing enterprises in particular, affirmed Prohibitionists' suspicions that immigrants were openly opposing and defying Anglo-American ideals and values. During the Great War, supporting Prohibition was portrayed as doing one's patriotic duty to defeat Germany. Thus, German-led breweries and saloons attracted the scrutiny of Prohibitionist supporters not just for moral reasons but even more so out of patriotic fervor.

Saloons – The Other German Venture

The involvement of Germans in the alcohol industry was not limited to beer brewing. German-led breweries faced an oversaturated market and actively scouted for new locations to expand their territory.¹⁰⁰ It was only natural for them to expand into the urban saloon business to gain access to new customers and increase sales. As late as 1920, the German-dominated beer industry controlled or owned more than 80 percent of the saloons.¹⁰¹ The German-American connection to the saloon business did not stop with the beer brewers. Saloon keeping and bartending were popular occupations for German immigrants. In 1880, 44 percent of the nation's saloonkeepers were German or German-American, and one-third of bartenders identified as German.¹⁰² Germans clearly dominated many aspects of the alcohol beverage industry.

The saloon stood in stark contrast to the family-friendly atmosphere of the beer gardens the breweries tried to convey. American saloon culture also differed from the more

100 Thomas Welskopp, "Bottom of the Barrel," *Behemoth A Journal on Civilisation* 6, no. 1 (2013): 27-54, Prohibition, in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, 4, ed. Jeffrey Fear, German Historical Institute, <https://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=87>.

101 Welskopp, "Prohibition in the United States," 33.

102 Kamphoefner, "The German Component to American Industrialization."

family-friendly German tavern culture. Thus, German-American saloonkeepers had to adapt to the US saloon culture that had derived from colonial taverns in order to attract a wider range of customers and stay competitive.¹⁰³ Saloons were an all-male environment. Prohibitionists viewed the saloon as a noxious institution, associated with prostitution, gambling, political corruption, and crime.¹⁰⁴ It is not surprising that Progressives and Prohibitionists alike addressed an important issue about the saloon culture and the type of customer it attracted. The typical customer came from the lower working classes. In the cities, this urban, industrial class consisted of mostly non-Protestant southern and eastern European immigrants.¹⁰⁵ However, German Catholic immigrants after 1870 also made up a considerable portion of the urban working class, particularly in the Midwest.¹⁰⁶

Saloons served mainly beer and whiskey since the breweries often owned the saloon, but, more importantly, these beverages were cheaper than wine and other liquors.¹⁰⁷ Thus, public drinking in the saloon increasingly became a working-class immigrant activity.¹⁰⁸ Tying the saloon to immigrants provided Progressives and Prohibitionists additional charges in their fight against its seedy existence. Not only did they call for the elimination of the saloon, but they also cast the saloon as a place that exploited immigrants. Without a doubt, both Progressives and Prohibitionists sought the extinction of a business enterprise that promoted alcohol, stood for questionable business practices, and attracted immigrant customers whom they identified as the “others” that were different and could not be trusted,

103 Benbow, “German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry.”

104 J. C. Burnham, “New Perspectives on the Prohibition “Experiment” of the 1920s,” *Journal of Social History* 2, no. 1 (Autumn 1968): 53.

105 Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement 1900-1920*, 16.

106 Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 36.

107 Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 52.

108 Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 52.

but needed to be assimilated into white, Protestant Anglo-American society.¹⁰⁹ Supporters of Prohibition failed to recognize that the saloon also served as a social institution and a place of adjustment for immigrants.

Especially in the cities, saloons were the social meeting place for male immigrants. Saloons were located in immigrant neighborhoods and often catered to and attracted members of a particular ethnic community. Saloon keeping was one of the most common forms of immigrant entrepreneurship.¹¹⁰ It was one of the few business opportunities available to immigrants to escape working industrial jobs. There was little start-up cost involved as breweries often sponsored saloons as exclusive outlets of their beer to create new markets and attract new customers.¹¹¹ The strong social ties to the ethnic community also helped in establishing a business. After all, a fellow immigrant was more likely to support a business if the owner came from the same ethnic background. The cultural connection and familiarity helped immigrants to keep their native customs and traditions alive. In return, the saloonkeeper served as a middleman and provided a space where newly arrived immigrants could find not only familiarity and a sense of stability but also advice on how to navigate life in their new homeland.¹¹² Prohibitionists, however, considered these services obstructive to their goals. For one, it prevented Prohibitionists from convincing immigrants of the positive aspects of giving up alcohol. Second, it hindered Prohibitionists in their attempts to assimilate immigrants into American society according to Anglo-American values and ideals.

109 Lee, "Techniques of Social Reform: An Analysis of the New Prohibition Drive," 67.

110 John Marshal Barker, *The Saloon Problem And Social Reform* (Boston: The Everett Press, 1905), 28; Ron Rothbart, "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise," *The International Migration Review* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 332.

111 Jon M. Kingsdale, "The 'Poor Man's Club': Social Functions of the Urban Working-Class Saloon," *American Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Oct. 1973): 474; Rothbart, "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise," 346-347; Welskopp, "Bottom of the Barrel," 33-34.

112 Rothbart, "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise," 10-11.

Third, Prohibitionists accused saloons of keeping immigrants under their control and influence (figuratively as well as literally) under the guise of providing social services. Prohibitionists were thus convinced that saloons were a dangerous obstacle that prevented immigrants from becoming Americans.

Besides serving alcohol, saloons provided a multitude of services to the working-class immigrant community. For some immigrants, the saloon became their second home. Living conditions in tenement housing were atrocious so that men used saloons as an escape not just from work but also from home. Immigrants used the saloon not only to socialize with friends, compatriots, and co-workers, to discuss politics, exchange news from the old country, and gossip, but the saloon also functioned as the business center for their daily needs.¹¹³ Immigrants could cash and also get an advance on their paycheck, obtain credit, and find a new job. Thus, the saloon functioned as the social network of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, Progressives and Prohibitionists viewed the saloon's services as a never-ending cycle of dependency. By offering a multitude of services seemingly unrelated to the drinking business, the saloon prevented immigrants from fully assimilating into American society and kept them tied to their ethnic communities. Progressives and Prohibitionists did not understand its important social function. In a sense, the saloon as a community center enacted its own assimilation program by providing services for immigrants to navigate their new homeland. The saloon did so by trying to bridge the cultural divide. For Prohibitionists and Progressives, the saloon represented a dangerous obstacle that prevented them from reaching immigrants in their assimilation efforts.

113 Kingsdale, "The Poor Man's Club," 476-478; Rothbart, "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise," 344.

The United States Brewers' Association – Defender of German-American Identity

At the time the Great War broke out, most brewers in the United States were of German descent.¹¹⁴ German-led breweries became synonymous with the wartime enemy. German brewers brought their craft and culture to the United States and tried to market their product for an American audience. They attempted to spread a different alcohol culture. The brewers were successful, as beer sales increased by almost 61 percent from 1899 to 1908.¹¹⁵ In a sense, the brewers were trying to Americanize German beer culture by emphasizing the wholesome family atmosphere of the beer gardens and infuse American culture with German hospitality. Beer gardens served as a community center where one could reminisce about the old country and keep old traditions alive.

Prohibitionists were strongly opposed to German convivial beer gardens and the culture they represented. In their view, there was no social benefit to taking your family on Sundays to a drinking venue. Not even the Schlitz Brewery Palm Garden that looked more like a formal dining room than a rowdy watering hole could convince Prohibitionists of the positive aspects of German-style social gatherings. As German-Americans saw it, Prohibition was directed primarily against their customs and traditions.¹¹⁶

It comes as no surprise that the United States Brewers' Association (USBA) vigorously fought against Prohibition, local, state, and national. The USBA had reasons to be

¹¹⁴ Eric Burns, *The Spirits of America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 166; Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 52-53; Welskopp, "Prohibition in the United States: The German-American Experience, 1919-1932," in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, 32, German Historical Institute, <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=87>http://www.ghi-dc.org/fileadmin/user_upload/GHI_Washington/Publications/Bulletin53/bu53_031.pdf.

¹¹⁵ Hugh F. Fox, "The Prosperity of the Brewing Industry," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 34, no. 3, American Business Conditions (Nov. 1909): 51.

¹¹⁶ Andrew Sinclair, *Prohibition – The Era of Excess* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 120.

concerned as the number of dry states was steadily increasing from 1914 onwards. By the time the US entered World War I, twenty-seven out of forty-eight states had passed Prohibition legislation.¹¹⁷ Thus, the USBA was keenly aware of the uphill battle beer brewers faced to save their economic livelihood. Founded in 1862 by German immigrant beer brewers in New York City, the USBA did not represent all brewers but considered itself the unified public face of the beer industry.¹¹⁸ Moreover, the USBA played an active role in developing and maintaining venues that helped create German-American ethnic identity. Beer gardens reflected German customs and traditions to American society, and thus, in a sense, played a crucial part in circulating the public image of “Germanness.” At the same time, the USBA was a powerful organization that helped to put brewers and their craft in a positive light. The USBA also brought German-American customs to the forefront by lobbying politicians on a state and national level in favor of their industry. Thus, the USBA could be regarded as a defender of German-American identity. At the same time, the USBA was a trade association and its main objective was to look out for and defend its members’ business and profits, as well as act as the public promoter of the trade.

The USBA published several books, pamphlets, and articles not only for its members but also for the public. Beginning around 1909, it began publishing its *Year Book of the United States Brewers Association*. These yearbooks served as a crucial source to assess the association’s attitude and reaction to counter the Anti-Saloon League’s Prohibition campaign. Meant to keep the beer brewing industry abreast of industry, economic, and political developments, the yearbooks also contained an assortment of articles, studies, and

117 “Prohibition States – History,” *The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing With Prohibition* (Cincinnati, OH: The Publicity Department of the National Association of Distillers and Wholesale Dealers, 1918), 7.

118 Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 28.

detailed statistics relating to the state of the industry and more generally to Prohibition overall. At the 1918 US Senate investigation, the secretary of the USBA, Hugh F. Fox, stated that the yearbooks were published for the benefit of the public and represented a “compendium of notable publications of the year.”¹¹⁹ The brewers were keenly aware that they could use their yearbooks to inform the broader public and made every effort to get their views on Prohibition out in public circulation. The yearbooks were gifted to universities and public libraries across the country, and according to the USBA Publication Committee, they were “regarded among professionals of all classes as the standard book of reference in relation not only to the beer industry, but the whole alcohol problem.”¹²⁰ While it is not clear how many people read the yearbooks or any other USBA publications, articles from the yearbooks also appeared in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals, thus reaching a broad audience from educated professionals to average working-class households. The USBA especially called on its members to use the material at public venues like exhibits at fairs and expositions. To reach the larger public, the USBA pointed out in their annual issues that the yearbooks were “designed for the use and benefit of students of the drink question,” and that readers could distribute the articles freely.¹²¹ According to records presented at the US Senate investigation, the USBA printed and distributed almost six million books, pamphlets, leaflets, and other printed materials in 1914 that were distributed through state and local brewing associations and USBA members to a large body of readers.

119 U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Subcommittee on the Judiciary United States Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda: Relating to charges against the United States Brewers' Association and Allied Interests (Pursuant to S. Res. 307 and 436)*, 65th Cong., 1st sess., 1919, 92-93.

120 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda*, 1080.

121 *The 1916 Yearbook of the United States Brewers' Association* (New York City: N.P., 1916), xiii. The *1919 Yearbook* was “offered to the public in the hope that its information may be of some value and its suggestions of some assistance in the rightful solution of a great problem and the advancement of the cause of temperance and morality,” viii.

The USBA also published articles in newspapers, magazines, professional journals, and mailed its publications to a list of about 50,000 persons who were members of professional organizations and leaders in the fields of economics, industry, labor, medicine, education, and social welfare. While this list addressed professionals and tried to reach people in leadership positions to favorably influence the public debate on Prohibition, the USBA also reached out to the “common man and woman” by printing articles in newspapers and publications across the country and addressing specific population groups and classes, such as Catholics, laborers, and African-Americans. In addition, the USBA sent yearbooks and other materials to members of Congress and “men who mold sentiment in each state,” thus hoping to influence lawmakers.¹²² This was especially important with the expansion of Prohibition legislation. By publishing and distributing its yearbooks and other print materials in a variety of sources, the USBA was able to reach a far greater and diverse audience than just its members and hoped to expand its influence in shaping the public debate on Prohibition.

The Unpatriotic Beer Drinkers

As the US entered World War I, the brewers seized the opportunity to point out in their publications that the Prohibitionists used anti-German war propaganda to discredit the German-dominated beer brewing industry and question their loyalty. In its 1919 yearbook, the brewers pointed out that the ASL accused the beer brewing industry of being controlled by German capital, and thus characterized the brewers and German beer as unpatriotic and

¹²² U.S. Congress, Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda*, 1083.

disloyal.¹²³ The article resumed asserting that the ASL used the German heritage of the brewers as “... the only basis for the charge brought against the industry,” to sell its prohibitionist propaganda throughout the war.¹²⁴ The USBA countered the charge of disloyalty, anti-Americanism, and support for Germany during the war by highlighting the connection between the history of the brewing industry in the US, which they admitted was heavily German-influenced, and the history of German-Americans and their contributions to their new home country. The brewers emphasized that they represented the American ideals of freedom and liberty, as many of them “had been associated with the battle for liberal institutions in their home country and this having failed, they had come to America to find freedom for themselves and their descendants.”¹²⁵ The brewers even attempted to paint themselves as the savior of the Union by reminding the readers that they were instrumental in financing the Civil War by advising the government on the beer barrel tax.¹²⁶ Realizing its tarnished reputation the brewing industry accepted (albeit reluctantly) the increase of the beer tax half a century later in the Emergency Revenue Act of 1914, hoping that the federal government was acknowledging the essential role alcohol revenue played for the nation’s economy.¹²⁷

In their yearbook articles, the USBA brought together a broad coalition of Prohibition opponents. While the anti-German aspect of the ASL played a role, particularly once the US entered the war, the USBA was careful to not make anti-German propaganda its central

123 “Facts Refute Unfair Charge,” in *The 1919 Year Book of the United States Brewers’ Association* (New York City: N.p., 1920), 113.

124 “Facts Refute Unfair Charge,” 114.

125 “Development of the Brewing Industry,” in *The 1919 Year Book of the United States Brewers’ Association* (New York City: N.p., 1920), 1.

126 “Development of the Brewing Industry,” 2.

127 Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 78-79.

argument. Instead, the yearbooks published a variety of articles that argued against Prohibition from different viewpoints. The USBA successfully united representatives from the government, judges, medical doctors, labor, and the military in their opposition to Prohibition. This diversity allowed readers to examine the issue of Prohibition from very different viewpoints. While articles and opinion pieces written by judges attacked Prohibition from the point of state rights, labor viewed it as an infringement on personal liberty. Medical doctors attested to the ambiguous definition of “intoxicating beverages” and argued that beer with an alcohol content of 2.75 percent did not fall into that category. AFL president Samuel Gompers, himself a proponent of temperance, wrote for the USBA 1918 yearbook that the rights of the majority of people should not be denied because a minority of people abuse alcohol.¹²⁸ Gompers also brought up the anti-immigrant aspect of Prohibition, particularly highlighting the anti-German notions. He asserted that the country was “... already asking about enough of our German fellow-citizens,” by demanding they show their loyalty “and give their support to the Government against the countries of their own birth ... without interjecting at this time a question of prohibiting their normal habits.”¹²⁹ Fighting German-Americans at home by restricting their customs and traditions would not ensure their loyalty and support of the war effort.

The USBA also gave soldiers of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) fighting in Europe an opportunity to voice their opinions about Prohibition. The 1918 yearbook reprinted an interview from the *New York World* with Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt III, serving in France, stating, “... the doughboys feel very much peeved that

128 “Labors Voice Heard,” in *The 1918 Year Book of the United States Brewers’ Association* (New York City: N.p., 1919), 42.

129 “Labors Voice Heard,” 45.

prohibition should have been enacted in their absence.”¹³⁰ Other soldiers shared the sentiment that they should have been able to share their opinions on legislation that affected their liberties. After all, they were fighting for the very same ideals of liberty, freedom, and democracy in the French trenches that Prohibition was taking away. In that sense, the USBA implied that the argument that supporting Prohibition was one’s patriotic duty was a false one. The ASL and its supporters did not give soldiers a voice. Thus, the ASL’s Prohibition campaign was disingenuous because it disregarded the opinions of those who participated in the ultimate form of patriotism – serving on the front lines.

Since the war was also used to gain support for Prohibition, the yearbooks cleverly connected the war effort with the Prohibition campaign. Throughout the war, Prohibition supporters argued that alcohol prohibition was necessary to conserve grain for food. Grain was needed to prevent Belgium from starving and keeping the allied war effort alive. Grain conservation would win the war. Thus, using grain for alcohol production was not only a waste but also seen as unpatriotic, even treasonous. The USBA countered this by showing that the main ingredients in beer, barley and hops, were hardly suited as food substitutes and that according to the Department of Agriculture the overwhelming need was for wheat, oats, and corn.¹³¹ The brewers also pointed out that the US allies did not restrict alcohol during the war. Quite the opposite, British and French officials made sure that their troops would have a sufficient supply of alcohol while fighting the war. The British even increased the production of beer to pacify workers in essential war industries. Similar to calls from American workers, “No Beer – No Work!,” British workers went on strike because of the shortage of beer during

130 “Roosevelt’s Son Empathetic,” in *The 1918 Year Book of the United States Brewers’ Association*, 39.

131 “Use of Grain in Brewing,” in *The 1917 Year Book of the United States Brewers’ Association* (New York City: N.p., 1918), 172.

the war.¹³² While Great Britain and France enacted some form of restrictions on distilled liquor, prohibition did not apply to beer, wines, and ciders.¹³³ Knowing that the US allies did not impose alcohol prohibition on their troops left a feeling of unfairness with not only the brewers but also with the American public, which was led to believe by the ASL that Prohibition was essential to win the war. To the reader of the USBA's yearbooks, it sounded more like the ASL sold Prohibition to the American public as a patriotic war duty and forced the US to go dry so Great Britain and France could continue producing and using alcohol.

A Desperate Alliance to Win the Battle Against Beer

While the USBA yearbooks were a useful tool to inform the industry and the public about the brewers' viewpoint on prohibition and their fight against it, the USBA needed a more powerful ally. Realizing the uphill battle, German-American brewers turned to the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) for support in their fight against Prohibition. On August 1, 1914, the Alliance opened its campaign against Prohibition, declaring, "Prohibition is a fight against the Germans."¹³⁴ It was an unfortunate date to pick as war loomed on the horizon in Europe. Austria had already declared war against Serbia a few days earlier, and Germany declared war on Russia the same day the Alliance started its anti-Prohibition campaign. The Anti-Saloon League used the relationship between the German brewers and the National German-American Alliance to link beer brewing and beer drinking

132 "Medical Science on the Side of Alcohol," in *The 1917 Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association* (New York City: N.p., 1918), 137-138.

133 "Medical Science on the Side of Alcohol," in *The 1917 Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association* (New York City: N.p., 1918), 193-195.

134 G. A. Dobbert, "German-Americans between the New and Old Fatherland, 1870-1914," *American Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (Winter 1967): 680.

to supporting Germany during the Great War.¹³⁵ The ASL now argued that Prohibition was a fight against Germany, and anybody opposed to it was not only unpatriotic and disloyal to the United States but in effect aided the enemy, Germany. Thus, German beer culture was seen as an attempt to undermine American culture and a threat to American democracy. Anybody drinking German beer was found guilty by association.

The anti-Prohibition alliance between the German brewers and the NGAA also caught the interest of the United States Senate, which launched an investigation into the “Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda” and presented its findings in 1919, one year after the United States Congress revoked the NGAA’s charter. The report insinuated that German brewers had engaged in un-American activities and were connected to the Bolsheviks. It charged German brewers with undermining American society by trying to purchase newspapers to influence public opinion about Prohibition and the war. The report further accused the brewers of using various methods to gain access to and influence the legislative process, as well as supporting Germany during the war.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the Senate expanded its accusations to include every German and German-American living in the United States. The report charged,

In addition, these Germans and German-Americans have maintained a system of social segregation through numerous local societies and organizations which come under the general head of vereins and verbunds, the object and purpose of which have been to preserve the language and customs of Germany, and to bind together those of German lineage.¹³⁷

135 Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 83; Welskopp, “Prohibition in the United States: The German-American Experience, 1919-1932,” 37.

136 U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Subcommittee on the Judiciary United States Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda: Relating to charges against the United States Brewers’ Association and Allied Interests (Pursuant to S. Res. 307 and 436)*, 65th Cong., 1st sess., 1919, 3-4.

137 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda*, 5.

Merely belonging to an association that preserved one's heritage by providing a community to exchange customs and traditions in the native tongue was sufficient reason to warrant an investigation by the US government. Here, the United States Congress showed its true intentions. The charges were deeply rooted in prevailing anti-German sentiments and were brought against the German brewers in particular, and German-Americans in general, because of their ethnic heritage. By bringing trumped-up charges against the German beer brewers and extending accusations of disloyalty and subversion to the entire German-American community, the report made it clear that German culture was on trial. German traditions and customs were seen as a threat to American society that had to be eliminated. One way of doing so was to shut down the German-dominated beer brewing industry. Prohibition legislation exploited and aided the government's anti-German sentiments. Attempts by the German brewers to amend the Volstead Act to permit light beer with an alcohol content of 2.75 percent were struck down, as was the inclusion of beer for medical use.¹³⁸ Thus, prohibition legislation not only targeted immigrants but, even more so, it was decisively anti-German.

Conclusion

The progression of the Prohibition movement from temperance and local alcohol restriction options to the constitutional amendment of prohibiting alcohol nationwide exposed the deep cultural differences between German-Americans and the predominant Anglo-American society. While American colonial drinking habits resembled those of

¹³⁸ Mittelman, *Brewing Battles*, 93; "Proofing War-Beer Non-Intoxicating," *The 1919 Yearbook of the United States Brewers' Association* (New York City: N.P., 1920), 116, 125.; "Popular Rights Defended," *The Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association for 1920-21* (New York City: N.P., 1922), 5-7.

German public drinking customs, these customs were no longer acceptable by the time Germans immigrated to the US in greater numbers. The influx of German immigrants during the mid-nineteenth century and the establishment of public drinking venues like the beer garden as a place for Sunday relaxation and public recreation clashed with the predominant Protestant Anglo-American view of Sunday as a day for church and family. German-American leisure habits were alien to Anglo-American culture. Although German-American communities were fragmented mainly by their religious and regional differences and thus lacked unity and a shared heritage, the beer gardens were instrumental in forging a common bond. Social conviviality, *Gemütlichkeit*, and the communal drinking of alcohol played an important role in creating a shared German identity despite religious and regional differences. Although German-Americans were generally considered one of the most desirable and reputable immigrant groups, Prohibitionists and Americanizers regarded their social customs as a threat. German-Americans became a target and needed to adopt the predominant Anglo-American values in all aspects of their lives.

Prohibitionists realized that in order to fully assimilate German-Americans and eliminate their traditions, they had to attack the German-dominated beer brewing industry. Taking advantage of the anti-German sentiments during World War I, Prohibitionists succeeded in convincing the US government to launch an investigation into the un-American activities of the USBA and the NGAA. Convincing the American public that German-American associations and German-Americans were disloyal and unpatriotic helped to not only shut down the German-dominated liquor industry but also to extinguish a crucial marker of German identity, the beer garden.

The drinking venues dominated by German-led breweries were not just places where immigrants would consume alcohol in a public setting, but they were important places for immigrant communities to connect with their fellow countrymen, reminisce about the old country, and receive valuable services that helped them navigate their new homeland. This drinking culture and its social aspects were foreign to the Prohibitionists, as they sought to create their ideal American society modeled on the virtues of old-stock, native-born, Protestant, white middle-class America. Immigrant traditions and specifically immigrant drinking culture clashed with Prohibitionists and Progressives, who advocated “100% Americanism.” At the same time, Prohibition was enacted to assimilate immigrants from those countries that were already in the United States and to restrict access to an important part of their culture, even preferred immigrants like German-Americans.¹³⁹

While Prohibitionists pursued the elimination of alcohol, they were also zealously seeking to assimilate immigrants and change their way of life. Prohibitionists realized that through Prohibition they could also bring the immigrants in line with their ideas of the ideal American society. By shutting down one of the most important social networks for immigrants, Prohibitionists prevented immigrants from practicing their alien ways and marginalized their cultures. Prohibition and the destruction of immigrant drinking culture played an essential part in the Americanization effort. By attacking the German-led beer brewing industry Prohibitionists particularly attacked and ostracized one of the most assimilated groups in American society, German-Americans. Ironically, Prohibition

139 Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement 1900-1920*, 117-119.

succeeded in turning them back into an ethnic minority.¹⁴⁰ German-style drinking culture simply had no place in the Prohibitionists' vision of American society.

140 Thomas Welskopp, "Prohibition (1919-1933)," in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, 4, ed. Jeffrey Fear, German Historical Institute, accessed January 26, 2017, <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=87>.

Chapter II

Setting the Stage – World War I Anti-German Propaganda Posters:

Fighting the Hun Abroad and at Home

“Put a flag at your door, another on your coat, and above all keep one in your heart.”¹⁴¹

German-American persistence in maintaining cultural traditions, particularly the social conviviality of the beer garden visit on Sundays, could be seen as resisting “100% Americanism.” This voluntary social segregation from the predominant Anglo-American culture placed German-Americans in a precarious situation when the US entered World War I in April 1917. The US entry into the war provided perhaps the best test for the nation to measure the success of its Americanization efforts. Aside from needing to create a unified population that supported the US war effort with one voice, the loyalty issue of the hyphenated Americans, as Theodore Roosevelt called the millions of naturalized Americans, was one of the main concerns of the US government as it prepared to take the nation to war. Nowhere was this more evident than in the German-American community.

As examined in the previous chapter, German-American cultural traditions like communal celebrations and the social aspects of spending Sundays at the beer garden had clashed with Anglo-American ideas of Sunday activities for some time. When the US entered the war on the Allies’ side and declared Germany as the war enemy, German-American leisure habits became even more suspect and were deemed unpatriotic. Prohibitionists seized the opportunity and joined those who engaged in anti-German rhetoric during the war, effectively using it for their own campaign. As this chapter will show, anti-German war

¹⁴¹ Joseph Buffington, *Friendly Words to the Foreign Born* (Committee on Public Information, 1917), 8.

rhetoric infiltrated the Prohibition campaign by using existing anti-German war propaganda and equating German brewers and German-Americans with the war enemy.

While anti-German Prohibition posters only accounted for a small number of the overall Prohibition images, they were extremely important in that they specifically pointed out Germans and their drinking culture. The posters particularly targeted German beer brewers and German-American social traditions. German-Americans were depicted using the stereotypical images from anti-German war propaganda and as such were easily recognizable. Similarly, the word usage was also reminiscent of anti-German war propaganda material. Prohibition posters used the “Hun” instead of German and generally followed the tone of the US government’s propaganda material. The *Kaiser’s* image appeared prominently on the Prohibition posters, as did the accusation that the brewing industry represented Germany’s interests in the US – an accusation that the US Senate also made in its 1918 investigation of the United States Brewers’ Association (USBA) and the National German-American Alliance (NGAA). Thus, the Prohibition posters connected the German war enemy with the unpatriotic and disloyal German-American beer brewers and beer drinkers, reminding the audience of their unpatriotic social customs.

Prohibition posters showed German-Americans in a negative light; beer brewers were seen as engaging in subversive practices by turning out a product that wasted precious resources and contributed to society’s social ills. German-Americans in general were accused of being loyal to the *Kaiser* and supporting the German war effort. Prohibition forces expanded and exploited the prevailing anti-German rhetoric and used anti-German war propaganda to corroborate the image of German brewers and German-Americans as enemies of the US.

To show the connection between anti-German rhetoric during World War I and Prohibition, it is essential to take a closer look at anti-German war propaganda material. In order to understand how anti-German war attitudes influenced and contributed to the Prohibition debate, one must understand how anti-German sentiments were operating during the war. Thus, an in-depth discussion of anti-German war propaganda is crucial to this thesis. This detailed analysis of propaganda material provides the necessary background to answer the questions of how and why Prohibition and anti-German sentiments got linked in public rhetoric during the war. While posters dominated the visual anti-German propaganda as a medium that delivered a message succinctly, other material published by the Committee on Public Information (CPI) also played a significant role in shaping the public's perceptions of German-Americans. This chapter analyzes a variety of different forms of the CPI's anti-German war propaganda (pamphlets, booklets, posters, and visual print material) to show how anti-German sentiments reached into every aspect of American society and continued into the Prohibition campaign. It then looks at a selection of Prohibition posters and cartoons to elucidate the development and connection between these two campaigns to create a common enemy – German-Americans.

The Creation of America's First Propaganda Ministry – The Committee on Public Information

The United States official entry into the Great War on April 6, 1917, found the country woefully unprepared on several fronts. Not only was manpower and military readiness an issue, but the American public was unprepared as well. American society needed to be educated and prepared to fight. The war had to be fought not only in the

trenches of eastern France but also at home. While President Wilson's war message to Congress on April 2, 1917, set the country officially on the warpath, American society needed far more coaxing. Although President Wilson had attempted to maintain a semblance of impartiality by declaring within a few weeks after the outbreak of the Great War in Europe that "The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name," urging Americans to "be impartial in thought as well as in action,"¹⁴² he realized that due to the diverse ethnic background of the American population it was an impossible request. Nevertheless, two-and-a-half years before the US declared war on Germany, Wilson made clear in his "Message on Neutrality" that he expected Americans to be loyal to America first and defend her interests, regardless of their ethnic heritage. With the US officially entering the war, the country needed to speak with one voice. While the official message stressed that the American public needed to be united and unified to fight Prussian Militarism and the *Kaiser's* Autocracy, it also implied that America's war enemy was Germany.

Although Wilson had implored Americans to stay impartial in 1914, the American public was divided, and loyalties generally fell along ethnic lines.¹⁴³ Americans of Anglo-Saxon (British) heritage favored the allied cause while German-Americans and Austrian-Americans were naturally sympathetic to the Central Powers.¹⁴⁴ The war also allowed for unusual alliances among different ethnic communities in the US. Americans of Irish heritage generally aligned with German-Americans and supported the Central Powers fighting the

142 Woodrow Wilson, "Message on Neutrality," August 19, 1914, The American Presidency Project, accessed April 14, 2018, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65382>.

143 William H. Thomas, Jr., *Unsafe for Democracy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 16-17.

144 Alan Axelrod, *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 178-180; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 213; Frederick Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans in World War I* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 84.

British.¹⁴⁵ In contrast, the various ethnic communities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire sided with the Allies.

Thus, it was crucial to the US war effort to unite the entire population and fight the war with one unified message. To achieve this lofty goal, President Wilson created the Committee on Public Information (CPI) via executive order one week after the US declaration of war. The text of Wilson's order is ominously short and vague. The President merely declared that he had created the Committee on Public Information, composed of the Secretary of State, Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Navy, and named George Creel as its civilian chairman.¹⁴⁶ Through this short and ambiguous executive order, President Wilson created America's first dedicated ministry of propaganda. Its purpose was to advertise and sell the war to the American public. The CPI was also tasked to promote the ideals and virtues of America and to unify public opinion. To achieve this, the CPI played a crucial role in developing the concept and image of the German enemy to the American public. The Committee's mission was to educate and inform the American public of the war effort. Anti-German war propaganda played an essential part in preparing the population for the fight against German Militarism abroad and at home. The CPI's anti-German war propaganda encouraged and validated anti-German sentiments against German-Americans, and aided Prohibition supporters in their campaign against German beer brewers.

When President Wilson asked the United States Congress for a declaration of war on April 2, 1917, he repeatedly emphasized that the United States was not at war with the German people. Perhaps Wilson had a sense of foreboding of anti-German violence to come

145 Thomas, *Unsafe for Democracy*, 45, 69, 129.

146 Woodrow Wilson, "Executive Order 2594 - Creating Committee on Public Information," April 13, 1917, The American Presidency Project, accessed April 14, 2018, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=75409>.

once America entered the war as a belligerent. In his war address, Wilson very clearly stated that the US had "... no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, ..."147 America's enemy, the President professed repeatedly, was Germany's imperial government and Prussian Militarism, as "... the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend."148 However, it proved difficult to wage a propaganda war against the imperial government of Germany while at the same time insisting that the US was not waging war against the German people. After all, the imperial government of Germany represented the German people, and the news of German soldiers committing atrocities on their march through Belgium made the distinction between Prussian Militarism and the German population a difficult one to maintain. Thus, one goal of the CPI was to distribute that message and to make clear that Americans understood the difference. According to the CPI's chairman, George Creel, the Committee was supposed to be the rational antidote and voice of reason to the emotionally charged rhetoric of the "super patriots."149 The CPI was supposed to disseminate factual information only and not appeal to emotions. Its primary purpose was to control every aspect of war information and sell the war to the American public.

The committee did not view itself as a censorship agency. Officially, there was no censorship by the US government. Instead, it relied on voluntary censorship by the media. Creel went so far as to proclaim, "It was up to each correspondent to comply with the wishes

147 Woodrow Wilson, "Address of the President of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the two Houses of Congress," April 2, 1917, in *How the War Came to America* (Washington, D.C., The Committee on Public Information, 1917), 35, 39.

148 Wilson, "Address of the President of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the two Houses of Congress," 37.

149 Marouf A. Hasian, Jr., "Freedom of Expression and Propaganda During World War I: Understanding George Creel and America's Committee on Public Information," *Free Speech Yearbook* 36, no. 1 (2012): 57.

of the government or to reject them,” leaving it up to the respective media’s “common sense and patriotism.”¹⁵⁰ The CPI’s principal mission was to oversee this program of voluntary censorship and to provide information about the war to the media. In that regard, the American public received government-controlled news about the war effort. Given the ever-increasing restrictive laws passed throughout 1917, the CPI’s authority was extended. Criticism of the US government and its policies now became illegal, and publications that depicted the US and the war effort in a negative light were deemed unpatriotic and banned. Thus, while Creel insisted that there was no official censorship, the media had little choice but to participate in Creel’s “voluntary censorship” and obtain war news from the CPI. Creel emphasized that the agency’s intention was not to censor the media but rather to act as a central coordinating agency that was responsible for providing factual information and controlling the daily news concerning military operations.¹⁵¹

The CPI’s second goal was to fight for national unity by shaping public opinion into a unified block. Similar to acting as a centralized news agency that controlled the flow and content of war news, the CPI established various divisions that would bring America’s war message to the people. Creel sought to apply the agency’s principle of providing factual war news to other war propaganda venues. It was essential to reach the American people through their minds and not by appealing to their emotions; the CPI’s work was “educational and

150 George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1920), 75.

151 Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 100; Nick Fischer, “The Committee on Public Information and the Birth of US State Propaganda.” *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2016): 64; Gary S. Messinger, *The Battle for the Mind: War and Peace in the Era of Mass Communication* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 13; James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, *Words that won the War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), 83.

informative only.”¹⁵² While Creel emphasized the importance of disseminating facts via newspapers and magazines, doing so via posters and speeches proved more difficult.

Posters and printed publications were not only aimed at selling the war to the American public but also were to provide supposed factual information and educate the public about the German enemy. While war propaganda posters reached an unprecedented audience in a quick and blunt manner, the CPI’s Division of Publications also aimed to spread the war message and create a unified public opinion about the war and its main enemy, Germany. The Division of Publication had three objectives: its publications aimed to explain America’s purpose and ideals; to unveil the aims, methods, and ideals of Germany’s militaristic autocracy; and to provide a guidebook for people who could not serve in the military but wanted to serve the nation in the war effort in various functions.¹⁵³

These publications were also translated and distributed to the various ethnic communities in the US to not only explain America’s war aims to the immigrant population but to also Americanize the diverse ethnic communities. The CPI mainly focused on the Central Powers’ ethnic groups. Naturally, German-Americans were the main targets. Creel considered it a crucial point in the overall war effort to publish CPI material in foreign languages to educate immigrants on America’s values of liberty, freedom, and democracy and to gain their support for the war effort.¹⁵⁴ Creel viewed the CPI’s work among the foreign-born as a teaching tool to convey American ideals and values to the immigrant communities. To assure the immigrants’ loyalty to America, Creel strongly believed that the

152 Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 129.

153 Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 104-108, 135.

154 Axelrod, *Selling the Great War*, 183; Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 113.

“real” America had to be revealed to them.¹⁵⁵ The CPI tried to distinguish between the Imperial German government and the German people and follow President Wilson’s message that the US had “no quarrel with the German people,” but was fighting Prussian autocracy.¹⁵⁶ However, it is difficult to think that people would not view their neighbor of German descent in the same unfavorable light as the *Kaiser* after reading about the latest German atrocities and German war aims in the CPI publications. The CPI sought to educate the population about Germany, its political structure, and the organization of its military.¹⁵⁷ The creation of war-related pamphlets was geared towards the entire US population. Creel believed that language was the principal vehicle of getting America’s war message to its citizens. The primary purpose was to explain to the public why the US was fighting Germany, but the pamphlets also provided detailed information about Germany, its political structure, and the organization of its military.¹⁵⁸

Exposing the German Enemy in his own Words

To educate Americans about the tactics and methods of the German military, the CPI published *German War Practices* and *German Treatment of Conquered Territory*. These publications provided a compilation of exploitations and atrocities committed by German soldiers in Belgium and France in their own words. The CPI cleverly used these as eyewitness accounts of German soldiers fighting in the war. Both booklets vividly described individual German soldiers looting, burning down villages, and executing civilians. The

155 Axelrod, *Selling the Great War*, 221.

156 Wilson, “Address of the President of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the two Houses of Congress,” 35.

157 Committee on Public Information, *Activities of the Committee on Public Information* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 8-11.

158 Committee on Public Information, *Activities of the Committee on Public Information*, 8-9.

experiences of the soldiers sounded very similar: many wrote about destroying Belgian houses after taking food, alcohol, furniture, and other valuables. The occupants of the houses were either displaced or killed, as a German non-commissioned officer wrote, “Everyone was shot or taken prisoner, and the houses were burnt.”¹⁵⁹

In *Treatment of Conquered Territory*, a German soldier’s diary provided detailed information on the conduct of the German military in Belgium. He wrote, “As always, the surrounding houses were immediately plundered. As a punishment the farm was burned. Twelve inhabitants were shot by firing squads and twenty-eight as they emerged from their burning houses.”¹⁶⁰ In short, the records suggested that the German military left a path of wanton destruction. From the diaries and letters of the German soldiers as well as official military orders, it became evident that Germany used Belgium as a resource-rich country that could be exploited and used for the war effort.¹⁶¹ The Belgian civilian population was used as forced labor. Any opposition to the German occupation was dealt with harshly; summary executions were carried out while other Belgians were deported to Germany to work there. The US ambassador to Belgium, Brand Whitlock, corroborated these experiences by sending detailed reports from the war zone that highlighted the German use of summary executions and civilian massacres in German-occupied Belgium.¹⁶² If the eyewitness reports were to be believed, the atrocities German soldiers committed against civilians were some of the most repugnant and abhorrent acts of wartime violence. Overall, these pamphlets underlined and validated the propaganda posters’ message that Germans were uncivilized brutes that

159 Committee on Public Information, *German War Practices* (N.p., 1918), 27.

160 Committee on Public Information, *German War Practices*, 34-37.

161 Committee on Public Information, *German War Practices* 60.; Committee on Public Information, *German Treatment of Conquered Territory* (Washington, D.C.: N.p., 1918), 26-28.

162 Committee on Public Information, *German War Practices*, 32-34.

subjugated civilized nations to enforce their militaristic autocratic system. Not only did the CPI publications implicate the Imperial German government, but by following orders, the average German soldier was also guilty of crimes against the Belgian civilian population.

Part of informing the American public about Germany's aims was done through the CPI Publication *Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in their own Words*. Whenever possible, the CPI resorted to material that offered first-hand evidence provided by the Germans themselves. In *Conquest and Kultur*, the CPI set out to "acquaint us [Americans] with the purposes and methods of the mediocrally minded group which controls the Central Powers," namely Imperial Germany.¹⁶³ This pamphlet aimed to prove that Germany's aggressive attacks on Belgium and France were long planned. Germany's war of aggression did not happen spontaneously but instead was the result of decades-long planning. Not only did the German military plan and prepare for the war, but according to the pamphlet, the leading political, intellectual, academic, and business elite were complicit in realizing this plan. Their cooperation was needed to spread the message of German cultural superiority and conquest, and to indoctrinate the German population. The pamphlet drew from speeches, newspaper articles, and writings covering the period from the founding of the German Empire in 1871 to the outbreak of the Great War. Most of the material quoted came from members of German nationalist organizations, like the Pan-German Party, which advertised for the expansion of the German Empire and the creation of a greater Germany that encompassed all German-speaking people across Europe.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in their own Words* (Washington, D.C., 1918), 7.

¹⁶⁴ Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 52-60.

The CPI considered the expansionist dreams of the Pan-German Party a valid threat to the American homeland. Although separated by the Atlantic Ocean, *Conquest and Kultur* implied that this natural border was not a deterrent for serious followers of the Pan-German ideology. In an 1896 speech, the *Kaiser* declared that the German government had an obligation towards Germans living abroad.¹⁶⁵ Throughout the next two decades, several prominent Germans picked up the *Kaiser's* message, taking up the cause of the plight of Germans living abroad. One fervent proponent decried “the desperate situation of the Germans living in the Slav and Magyar countries,” as well as “the disappearance of the German strain in the Anglo-Saxon States, in North America, in South Africa, and Australia.”¹⁶⁶ Considering the decline of Germans and German culture and traditions around the world it was not possible to “further Kultur exclusively by peaceful means.”¹⁶⁷ Some Pan-German expansionists published plans for the invasion of the United States as early as 1901. They considered the US as being in no position to defend itself against a German invasion.¹⁶⁸ Others were more cautious, hoping instead for the cooperation of the millions of Germans who immigrated to the US. It was clear to them that just by sheer numbers, “In a hundred years the American people will be conquered by the victorious German spirit, so that it will present an enormous German Empire.”¹⁶⁹

These publications were used to portray Germans in general as a people that wanted to expand its reach, population, and culture across the world by violent means if necessary. They set the stage for German-Americans to be viewed in the same light, especially since

165 Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 75.

166 Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 79.

167 Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 79.

168 Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 95.

169 Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur*, 96.

quite a few of them were supportive of Germany in the first two and a half years of the war, during America's neutrality phase. German-Americans also showed some characteristics that were not desirable for Anglo-Americans. Their Sunday traditions especially provoked the ire of Prohibitionists and pious Americans who detested German-Americans' public celebration of drinking alcohol and enjoying their day of rest. To them, German-Americans resembled the uncivilized brutes that wreaked havoc on Belgium. Thus, the tone was set to view German-Americans with suspicion.

Undermining America one German-American at a Time

The unwillingness of some German-Americans to give up their ethnic traditions, namely the beer garden, and assimilate 100 percent into Anglo-American society placed them firmly into the suspicious category. It was not difficult to make the connection to the German war enemy and declare them as enemies as well. Thus, the idea that the German enemy was already living among patriotic Americans in the form of German-Americans was not new. Even President Wilson addressed the issue in his war message to Congress, claiming, "... its spies were here even before the war began."¹⁷⁰ Taking Wilson's statement in conjunction with the CPI's publications, one could conclude that Germany sent its citizens to the US on purpose with the mission to undermine the US system and prepare for an invasion and a German takeover. The danger that emanated from German-Americans was further explored and uncovered in the CPI's pamphlet *German Plots and Intrigues*. This publication left no doubt that the US was wholly infiltrated by Germans. No German immigrant, no naturalized citizen – the so-called hyphenated Americans – could be trusted.

¹⁷⁰ Wilson, "Address of the President of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the two Houses of Congress," 37.

After all, they held on not only to their language but also to their social customs that ran counter to Anglo-American sensibilities, particularly German-Americans' attitude about communal drinking on Sundays. As historians noted, German-Americans made it clear that they refused to give up their traditions of imbibing, thus putting themselves further into the category of suspicious hyphenated Americans.¹⁷¹

German Plots and Intrigues accused German officials of systematically organizing acts of sabotage of essential war industries in the US and undermining the US government and the war effort in general. Although the pamphlet stated that the reported incidents all occurred before 1915, it mentioned the 1917 Zimmermann Telegram and printed its text in full. According to *German Plots and Intrigues*, the German government also spread pro-German propaganda in US magazines and newspapers during the neutrality phase. The German government further encouraged "Pacifism by teaching the waste and wickedness of war, to provoke strife between America and the Allied states."¹⁷² The booklet gave compelling evidence that the German government was somewhat successful in recruiting German-Americans to participate in various acts of sabotage and treason. The German government attempted to instill patriotic feelings in its citizens abroad who were detached from their fatherland. One report claimed that the German government used coercion and intimidation and accused German-Americans of treason under the German Criminal Code if they worked in factories that supplied war material to the Allies.¹⁷³ The promise of financial compensation usually accompanied efforts to lure German-Americans to participate in acts of

171 Ritter, "Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860," 28.

172 Committee on Public Information, *German Plots and Intrigues* (Washington, D.C., 1918), 55.

173 Committee on Public Information, *German Plots and Intrigues*, 10-11.

sabotage against the US.¹⁷⁴ One has to wonder then if these acts of sabotage were done out of love for the far-away fatherland and the hopes of a Pan-German Empire that encompassed the US or more out of the need for extra income. The investigation by the US Senate into the USBA and NGAA activities to spread pro-German propaganda and undermine the US war effort also seemed to validate the suspicion that German-American organizations and their members were acolytes of the German government. Regardless of the motivation, the CPI painted a frightening picture of a German enemy that was already living among American citizens. Just like the *Destroy this Mad Brute* poster implied, the uncivilized German brute had already set foot on American soil (Figure 11). Thus, the US government's attempt to distinguish between fighting the war against the imperial government of Germany and German-Americans at home failed.

The CPI successfully planted the “enemy among us” picture into American society. By using posters and pamphlets, the CPI was able to utilize a variety of media to inform the American public about the nation's war aims and its enemy. Publications outside the CPI's reach generally supported its message with an independent touch. Within a week of the US entry into the war, and a day after President Wilson created the CPI, the *Literary Digest* deemed it necessary to inform its readers about the reaction of the German-language press in the US to the US war declaration. The general tenor of various German-language newspapers across the nation during the first week of the US official declaration of war was that the US government did not have to worry about the loyalty of German-Americans. The papers quoted in the *Literary Digest* agreed that all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, had to comply with the duties now imposed on them by the nation. The Cincinnati *Freie Presse* pledged the

¹⁷⁴ Committee on Public Information, *German Plots and Intrigues*, 21-22, 41; Wüstenbecker, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 81-83.

loyalty of German-Americans because “the welfare of our adopted country is sacred to us.”¹⁷⁵ The St. Louis *Westliche Post* saw no reason for German-Americans to publicly proclaim their loyalty and reminded the readers of the contributions and sacrifices of German-Americans during the American Civil War. The paper proudly stated, “With their blood they have helped to build and uphold the nation,” thus implying that German-Americans had already paid their dues of loyalty to the nation.¹⁷⁶

While *The Literary Digest* in April 1917 assured its readers of the loyalty of German-Americans and the German-language press in the US, it became more critical and even suspicious over the next fifteen months. Like the majority of newspapers, magazines, and journals, *The Literary Digest's* articles resembled those of official CPI publications. In July 1918, it reported that Germany had tried to influence and even control the press of the US since early 1915 in an attempt “... to instill pro-German sentiment, keep the German-American element intact, promote peace talk, justify Hun action, and influence legislation.”¹⁷⁷ The article seemed to corroborate in great detail one of the many stories the CPI published in *German Plots and Intrigues*, mainly that the Imperial German government, through its representatives in the US, interfered in the US war effort. Making stories about perceived German influence and sabotage acts available to a larger audience helped spread the image of disloyal and treacherous German-Americans who were working against the US war effort. Likewise, the USBA and NGAA Senate investigation also aided to plant a general distrust of German-Americans. Prohibitionists took advantage of the anti-German rhetoric and used the images of the disloyal and treacherous German-American organizations for their

175 “German-American Thoughts on America at War,” *The Literary Digest* LIV, no. 15 (April 14, 1917): 1051-1052.

176 “German-American Thoughts on America at War,” 1051.

177 “‘Kultur’ Propaganda Here,” *The Literary Digest* LVIII, no. 4 (July 27, 1918): 12.

campaign. Combined with the war posters, these articles reinforced the idea that the enemy was already living among the population.

Giving German-Americans a Chance of Loyalty

The CPI foresaw that its anti-German war propaganda material might be misappropriated to attack German-Americans. In August 1917, it published a twenty-four-page pamphlet, titled *American Loyalty*. In it, prominent German-Americans proclaimed their loyalty to the US and attempted to convince the nation that it had nothing to fear from the hyphenated Americans. Overall, the pamphlets echoed President Wilson's words, emphasizing that the ancestral home of German-Americans had been robbed of its positive character because of the *Kaiser's* autocratic leadership.¹⁷⁸ Similar to *The Literary Digest* from April 1917, Franz Sigel, the son of prominent Union General Franz Sigel, reminded readers of the sacrifices German-Americans had made to save the Union during the Civil War. Sensing that some of their fellow German-Americans had doubts or were torn in their loyalties, the short essays also tried to convince them to support the US in the war. The authors appealed to their fellow countrymen (and women) that German-Americans had an obligation to free the world of German oppression. To support the US war effort meant to fight against a tyrannical German government and thus rescue and restore their old fatherland.¹⁷⁹

By giving German-Americans a public platform to profess their loyalties, the CPI also allowed them to use it as a defense mechanism. At the same time, the *American Loyalty*

178 Otto Kahn, "Americans of German Origin and the War," in *American Loyalty* (Committee on Public Information: Washington, D.C., 1917), 8.

179 Kahn, "Americans of German Origin and the War," 7-10.

pamphlet was another example of the CPI trying to project the image of an informational agency that educated the American public on the war effort. *American Loyalty* attempted to counterbalance the emotionally charged propaganda posters that were quick to imply that German-Americans were disloyal, traitors, and spies. At the same time, these German-Americans appeared to be American “super patriots” and blamed recent immigrants from Germany for the negative image of the German-American community as a whole. One writer in particular accused the new German immigrants of the 1900s of being “imbued with a sense of superiority and an everlasting praising of the fatherland that amounted to boasting of what they could do in a military way.”¹⁸⁰ Thus, it is not surprising that the CPI published *American Loyalty* in German in September 1917 in an effort to reach German immigrants. The CPI was hoping that the patriotic messages of loyalty to the US by fellow German countrymen would convince them to support the US war effort.

The CPI’s Poster Division

Perhaps the most effective division of the CPI and the one most commonly known for its poster production was the Division of Pictorial Publicity. This division employed famous artists of the time (James Montgomery Flagg, Harry R. Hopps, Charles Dana Gibson, to name a few) to produce some of the most iconic war posters. Posters were the ideal media to reach a broad audience. While the poster division produced and commissioned powerful prints for a variety of US government agencies, organizations like the YMCA and the Red Cross created their own war-related recruiting material. Artists employed by the CPI designed and created 2500 different posters, of which 20 million were printed and brought

¹⁸⁰ Hans Russau, “Plain Words by a Plain Citizen,” in *American Loyalty* (Committee on Public Information: Washington, D.C., 1917), 19.

into circulation.¹⁸¹ These posters advertised Liberty Bond Drives, urged Americans to save resources for the US Food Administration and the US Department of Labor, enticed them to enlist in the military, and educated them about the dangers the German enemy represented. The US produced more posters to convince its population of the war effort than all other combatant nations combined.¹⁸²

Contrary to the CPI's aim to appeal to peoples' reason, war posters, in general, were meant to spread patriotic pro-war messages and stir patriotic emotions.¹⁸³ They followed Creel's message to create national unity by depicting American ideals of liberty and freedom to highlight what was at stake in the fight against German Militarism. The CPI followed the examples of Great Britain and France, painting the German enemy as an uncivilized brute that killed innocent civilians. The aim was to enrage the average American by using these images, thus doing precisely the opposite of what Creel and the CPI set out to do. The purpose of the war propaganda posters was to create a negative effect and distrust not only Germans living in Imperial Germany but also German-Americans.

The Division of Pictorial Publicity turned the CPI into "a gargantuan advertising agency" that was in the business of advertising the war, selling the war, advertising the ideals and virtues of America, and denigrating the supposed characteristics of the German enemy.¹⁸⁴ The stereotype of the disloyal German-American also carried over into the Prohibition campaign, which continued the narrative of the disloyal and un-patriotic German-American from the anti-German war propaganda. Prohibition posters often depicted drinking

181 Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 59-60.

182 Simone Stiehl, "Mobilisierung des amerikanischen Volks zum Eintritt in den Ersten Weltkrieg mithilfe von Bildpropaganda," *Scriptum* 4, no. 2 (2014): 82; Brewer, *Why America Fights*, 60.

183 Axelrod, *Selling the Great War*, 139.

184 Sheldon Garon, *Beyond Our Means* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 182.

beer as a typical German-American tradition and accentuated it with anti-German rhetoric, thus questioning their loyalty and true intentions. The vast majority of World War I propaganda posters in the US reflected Wilson's aim to unify the country for the war effort. As mentioned above, artists employed by the CPI designed a vast array of posters that would reach every American, regardless of their ethnic heritage. While some posters were specifically designed with the diverse immigrant population in mind and printed in a multitude of languages, the overarching aim was to promote unity and convince Americans to do their part to support the war effort. This chapter looks at a few general propaganda posters that were not explicitly anti-German. This will help to get a sense of how pervasive anti-German imagery was and how the messages and themes of the general propaganda posters were reflected in the posters clearly geared against the German enemy and vice-versa.

Doing Your Part in Defending the Nation

The sentiment that everybody could and should do their part to help the war effort is evident in the *Your Country Calls – Enlist – Plow – Buy Bonds* poster (Figure 3). The dark colors of brown, beige, and green give the poster an overall depressed appearance. It shows a soldier in the forefront, flanked by a farmer and a businessman. Each of the men holds a typical tool of their trade in their hands: the farmer holds a spade; the businessman is dressed in a suit holding a bag that probably contains money. The soldier is easily identifiable as he takes the center space. The poster emphasized that everybody is called to duty and can support the war in various ways. Serving one's country during wartime did not necessarily mean one had to join the military. Growing crops, feeding the nation and the Allies, as well

as producing war goods, and buying war bonds to finance the war were also crucial ways of supporting the war effort. The poster clearly gave people agency in the war, meaning that people could decide which role to take. However, the poster also unequivocally reinforced the message that everybody was obligated to do his or her part and heed the nation's call to duty.

The message of agency was also evident in the *It's Up To You – Protect the Nation's Honor* poster (Figure 4). This poster, too, addressed the viewer directly and implied that one person could make a difference in this war. Everybody was a valuable asset to the nation and played a valuable part in the effort to defeat the German enemy and win the war. *It's Up To You* appealed to the viewer's sense of patriotic duty by employing stereotypical patriotic symbols. A male figure that was most likely supposed to represent Uncle Sam but looked more like Jefferson Davis points his fingers directly at the viewer. He stands behind a white woman who is draped in white cloth, presumably Columbia. An American flag surrounds her, with a sword lying at her feet. Interestingly, this poster was very much reminiscent of a scene recruiting southern men to fight in the Civil War. The appeal to *Protect the Nation's Honor* also amplified the connection with the Civil War. The poster's message was twofold. On the one hand, it was the duty of every American man to protect and defend the nation's honor. At the same time, the nation's honor was equated with that of white women. Thus, every man was also obligated to defend the honor of America's white women. The aspect of defending and protecting white womanhood was important during the early twentieth century and was reinforced in the white slave narratives of the time. Books such as Ernest Albert

Bell's *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls: Or War on the White Slave* highlighted the horrors of white women lured into prostitution or sexual relationships with non-white men.¹⁸⁵



Fig. 3. *Your Country Calls – Enlist – Plow - Buy Bonds.*¹⁸⁶

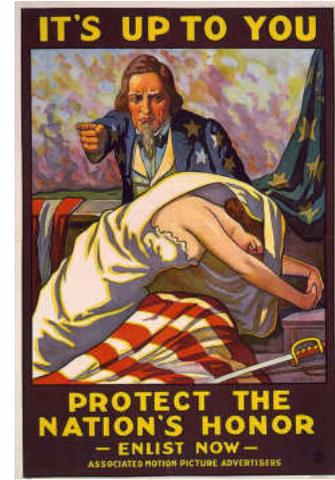


Fig. 4. *It's Up to You – Protect the Nation's Honor.*¹⁸⁷

A search at the Library of Congress Online Digital Collections provides a plethora of World War I propaganda posters that employed the themes of duty and honor. Posters with titles like *Enlist – On Which Side of the Window are You?*, *He is Keeping the World Safe for Democracy*, or *Spirit of 1917* all appealed to men to step up and defend the nation.¹⁸⁸ The posters made it clear that civilization was at stake and that the entire nation needed to come together and do its part. To convince the various ethnic communities to support the war effort, the CPI created posters that specifically targeted immigrants. One such poster, *Remember! The Flag of Liberty – Support It!*, shows an immigrant family standing in front of

¹⁸⁵ Ernest Albert Bell, *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls: Or War on the White Slave* (Chicago: G.S. Ball, 1910).

¹⁸⁶ Lloyd Myers, *Your Country Calls – Enlist – Plow - Buy Bonds*, 1916, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 8, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/00652167/>.

¹⁸⁷ Schneck, *It's Up to You – Protect the Nation's Honor*, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 8, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/92506221/>.

¹⁸⁸ While not every single US World War I propaganda poster is available online at the Library of Congress, its Digital Collection of World War I Posters provides a plethora of posters created by the various agencies for the US Government. The collection offers a glimpse into the fascinating world of war propaganda posters, their messages, and their art. The collection can be found at <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/about-this-collection/>.

a boat with the US flag waving in the background (Figure 5). While the CPI made sure that posters for immigrants were published in different languages, the message of these posters was easily discerned, even without words.

The CPI reminded immigrants of their duty to their new country. The US had opened its arms and welcomed them in, and it was now time that they repaid that debt by supporting the war effort. This could be done in different ways. While immigrants indeed served in the US military and fought in Europe, the CPI also needed to reach the families of immigrant soldiers. Again, the message to immigrants was the same as the rest of the country: everybody had to do his or her part to ensure the world would be safe for democracy again.

Posters developed for the US Food Administration and the campaign to conserve food and other resources were used to guide families. These posters were generally produced in a multitude of foreign languages, as were posters designed to entice immigrants to buy Liberty Bonds. *Food Will Win the War* set a powerful example that addressed immigrant families in particular (Figure 6). Similar to *Remember! The Flag of Liberty – Support It!*, this poster also depicts an immigrant family in stereotypical fashion. In this poster, immigrants are still on a ship that approaches the Statue of Liberty. Above the Statue of Liberty is a rainbow in the colors of the US flag, and the buildings of the New York skyline appear in gold. The immigrants on board are waving their hats, cheerfully anticipating their new life in America. At the same time, while welcoming the newest immigrants, the US Government reminded them of their duty. The poster stated that the immigrants came to the US seeking freedom and that they now must help to preserve freedom. These posters also served as an important Americanization tool, as they were used to teach immigrants what was expected of them not only during wartime but also in peace. The question of loyalty loomed especially large

during the war. Still, even before the US entered World War I, assimilation supporters were hard at work to mold the new arrivals into Americans.

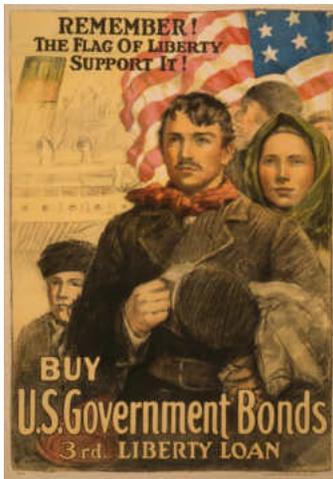


Fig. 5. *Remember! The Flag of Liberty-Support It!*¹⁸⁹



Fig. 6. *Food Will Win The War*¹⁹⁰

Food conservation posters and posters advertising Liberty Bonds played a crucial role in spreading the message to support the war effort across the US population. The United States Food Administration published pamphlets encouraging the population to participate in the various “-less” days of the week. This meant to forego wheat, meat, and dairy at least one day each per week (for example: “Wheatless Monday, Meatless Tuesday”) and use substitute ingredients. To support the war effort, people were also urged to have fat-and sugar-saving days and two porkless days during the week.¹⁹¹ The war’s food saving campaign also brought Prohibition to the forefront. Abstaining from alcohol was patriotic and helped the war effort

189 United States Department of the Treasury, *Remember! The Flag of Liberty -Support it!*, 1918, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/00652167/>.

190 C. E. Chambers, *Food Will Win the War*, 1917, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002720171/>. This poster was also produced in Yiddish.

191 Opposed to food rationing, Herbert Hoover, Director of the United States Food Administration, introduced a food preservation program urging Americans to voluntarily give up certain foods one day a week. Thus, “Meatless Monday, Wheatless Wednesday” were born; *War Service in the Home*, United States Food Administration (Washington: Government Printing Office, November 1917).

because it conserved grains for food and not beer or distilled liquor. Even more so, drinking beer was considered unpatriotic as the majority of the beer brewers was of German descent and through their association with the USBA and NGAA were accused of supporting Germany. While the food conservation posters did not specifically target German-Americans or any other ethnic groups, the Prohibitionists used their message to depict beer brewers as joyfully wasting resources and purposefully turning American men into alcoholics unfit for war duty, thus sabotaging the US war effort and aiding Germany. In that sense, the Prohibitionists used the food conservation posters to link both campaigns and identify the beer brewers as enemies.

Posters and pamphlets that advertised planting Victory Gardens, displayed recipes, as well as posters urging people to buy Liberty Bonds, were distributed in large numbers.¹⁹² The Liberty Bond posters continued with the patriotic theme of doing your duty for the nation, even enlisting the help of children. The poster, *My Daddy bought me a Government Bond* also appeals to the sense of protecting the nation and the family (Figure 7). A little white girl is clutching her Liberty Bond and holds it close to her chest while proudly proclaiming that her Dad bought her a Liberty Bond. The girl is asking the viewer, presumably another child, if his or her Dad did the same. The CPI deliberately used children to drive home the message that even a child would welcome the gift of a Liberty Bond over a toy (and thus, reject a much more child-appropriate gift) in order to help with the war effort. Not only that, but even the child realized the severity of the situation, that without buying Liberty Bonds to support

192 Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 27-65; Library of Congress Digital Collections Posters: World War I Posters, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?q=food>.

the war and ensure an Allied victory, her future, and that of the next generation and, in a broader context, the future of America, was at stake.

Children were a popular subject for propaganda posters. They reminded the viewers that the war was not just fought to liberate Europe from German militarism, but even more so, it was fought to ensure American children would have a future. Searching the Library of Congress Collection, out of 777 US propaganda posters, 138 (about 18 percent) contained either images of or references to children.¹⁹³ While this section only discussed a small selection of US propaganda posters, it is evident that the CPI did not leave any aspect of American life and society untouched. American society needed to be unified in its fight against the war enemy. The influence and impact of the CPI to shape everyday American life towards supporting the war effort cannot be overstated. The next section takes a closer look at the CPI's role in shaping America's opinion of the German war enemy.

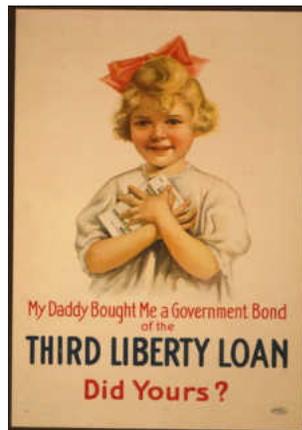


Fig. 7. *My Daddy bought me a Government Bond*¹⁹⁴

193 Library of Congress, *Digital Collections - Posters: World War I Posters*, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?q=children>.

194 *My Daddy bought me a Government Bond of the Third Liberty Loan--Did yours?*, 1917, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections - Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 10, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002707404/>.

The Hun Among Us –

The German Enemy in Visual Material

World War I propaganda posters set out to create national unity by calling on all Americans to do their part in supporting the war effort. These posters promoted the ideals and virtues of America in an upbeat and positive manner. However, ensuring that Americans knew what their doughboys were up against when facing the German enemy in the trenches required a different tactic. While anti-German war propaganda posters also stirred patriotic emotions, they were markedly different in their design and their message. These posters were meant to dehumanize the German enemy, and also evoked fear, terror, mistrust, and suspicion, and thus strengthened the persistent anti-German sentiments.

For example, the Navy enlistment poster *When You Fire Remember This* shows a US sailor rescuing a little girl from a lifeboat that has *Lusitania* printed on its side (Figure 8).¹⁹⁵ To drive home the horrors of that event, both the sailor and the little girl are underwater, seemingly drowning. Behind the sailor are his dead comrades lined up, and behind the girl lurks an army of other drowning children, ready to be rescued. Posters like this helped to paint the German enemy as an inhumane and brutal savage who would stop at nothing. Similarly, *Remember Belgium* served as a rallying cry to pull Americans out of their indifference and remind them of the atrocities Germans had committed on their warpath.¹⁹⁶ About thirty-five posters in the Library of Congress Collection dealt explicitly with Belgium. While most of them mentioned Germany only covertly, the message as to why Belgium

¹⁹⁵ William Allen Rogers, *When You Fire Remember This – Enlist in the Navy*, 1917, Library of Congress. *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 9, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002722432/>; other posters reminding Americans of the Germans' sinking of the *Lusitania* include *Take Up the Sword of Justice*, and a poster simply titled *Enlist* that shows a woman holding a baby in her arms while drowning in the Atlantic Ocean, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?q=Lusitania>.

¹⁹⁶ Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?q=belgium>.

needed the US' help was clear: Belgian children were starving because of Germany, Belgian cities were in ruins because they were in the way of Germany's march to France. Even posters that did not mention Germany directly, but which linked the poster's message to Germany's war campaign, played an important role in getting Americans to support the war. The following in-depth analysis of anti-German propaganda posters elucidates the CPI's development of a more emotional approach to portray the German enemy.



Fig. 8. *When You Fire Remember This*¹⁹⁷

Overall, anti-German propaganda posters constituted a small percentage of the war propaganda posters. The Library of Congress holds almost one-third of all US World War I Propaganda Posters produced in its World War I Posters Digital Collection.¹⁹⁸ Out of nearly 800 posters available at the Library of Congress, about 5 percent were specific anti-German propaganda posters that either depicted the German enemy directly or dealt with Germany in

¹⁹⁷ William Allen Rogers, *When You Fire Remember This - Enlist in the Navy*, 1917, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 9, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002722432/>.

¹⁹⁸ Library of Congress, Digital Collections, "Posters: World War I Posters," <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?fa=location:united+states>.

some way. While the total number of printed anti-German propaganda posters is unclear, they were distributed in much the same way as other war-related propaganda material. Anti-German propaganda posters were an excellent tool to recruit men, and to some extent women, into military service. Aside from military recruiting stations, these posters could also be found in public places like billboards, theaters, and stores. In addition, these posters appeared in magazines like *The Literary Digest*, *The Atlantic*, *Life Magazine*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*, as well as newspapers. Thus, it would not be unreasonable to infer that anti-German posters were seen by a fairly large section of American society. Judging by the outburst of public anti-German sentiments that ranged from the renaming of streets, places, foods, and cities to forcing German-Americans to perform acts of loyalty in public to physical attacks and reporting German-Americans for suspicious behavior, the public seemed to have perceived these posters as confirmation and validation.

From Baseball Games to Fearsome Ogre –

Dehumanizing the German Enemy

While the vast majority of US propaganda posters did not directly address the German enemy, the ones that did were dramatic. They were meant to be shocking, evoke fear, and portray the German enemy as inhumane, repulsive creatures. To do so, the CPI employed various tactics. Not all anti-German propaganda posters portrayed Germans as a warmongering beast. The CPI's poster styles ranged from depicting the German enemy as a cartoonish *Kaiser* to an ape-like beast. During the first few months after the US entered the war, posters were generally geared directly at the *Kaiser*. The CPI followed Wilson's line that the American people were not at war with the German people but were fighting against

the autocratic militarism the *Kaiser* and his government represented. However, the longer the war lasted, the more German atrocities and war tactics came to light, and especially after the first doughboys were sent into the trenches to fight the Germans, the portrayal of the German enemy changed. The German war enemy increasingly became less human and more beast- and brute-like. This dehumanization encompassed Germans and all things German in general. No longer did the posters focus on the *Kaiser* and portray him as a sword-swinging cartoon character, or a spider weaving his web around Europe; rather, the portrayal of the German enemy in the later posters played on perceived typical German characteristics.

This section provides an in-depth analysis of three anti-German war propaganda posters. The three posters stood out in that they elucidated the development of the portrayal of the German war enemy from the typical cartoonish characterization of the *Kaiser* to the fear-evoking beast. With only a small percentage of posters being directly anti-German, these three posters represented particularly explicit anti-German posters. However, these posters set the stage and aided the Prohibition campaign posters, specifically posters that depicted the *Kaiser*. Here, the posters seamlessly continued with the same anti-German war portrayal of the *Kaiser*. Prohibition posters used similar stereotypes that easily identified the *Kaiser* as well as portraying easily recognizable German features, such as a beer mug, dress, and facial features. At times, these Prohibition posters could very well have been reproduced from anti-German war propaganda posters.

The poster titled *Strike Two* was published in 1917 for the second Liberty Loan Drive, which started October 1, 1917 (Figure 9). Approximately six months after the US entry into World War I, the country was in the middle of focusing its industrial production on the war effort. The predominant colors are the national colors of the US – red, white, and

blue. “Strike Two” is printed above a white hand holding a baseball that is also colored red, white, and blue with the words “Second Liberty Loan of 1917.” On the right side of the poster is a cartoon depiction of Kaiser Wilhelm II, wearing the German-style military helmet (Pickelhaube). He is holding a sword that is dripping with blood, at his feet lays a human skull. The poster’s message challenged all Americans to “Help strike out military autocracy! Every Liberty Bond you buy helps win the war.” The poster referred not only to the second Liberty Loan Drive but also to America’s favorite pastime, baseball. The central message of the poster encouraged Americans to buy war bonds to support the war effort and to make the *Kaiser* strike out. Since this was the second drive, it was the public’s second chance to support the war effort monetarily. In case one had not done his/her patriotic duty and participated in the first drive, this was the second chance – or strike two. The underlying meaning here was that if one decided not to participate in the second drive, there was only one last strike left to show one’s loyalty. Using the baseball metaphor, it follows that if one misses strike three, one is expelled.

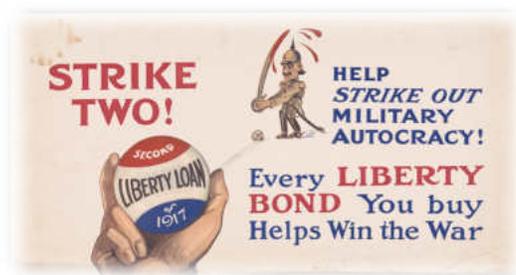


Fig. 9. *Strike Two! Help Strike Out Military Autocracy!*¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ *Strike two! Help strike out military autocracy!*, 1917, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 2, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/00652362/>.

One could argue that the poster trivialized war and portrayed it as a game. However, by using baseball, the nation's favorite pastime that united Americans of all social classes, the poster also appealed to the common bond. It used the quintessential American game to unite the population in the country's fight against the enemy, German Militarism. Working together as a team, America could win this game.²⁰⁰ The poster very cleverly used symbols of American mass culture, connecting them to the war effort. In this case, the military represented the national team that everybody needed to support in its effort to make the *Kaiser* strike out. At the same time, the message "Strike Two!" was also a warning to the enemy, the Imperial German government, and by default, German soldiers. The American public was supporting the war through a second Liberty Bond Drive, willing to make sacrifices to defeat the enemies of the American way of life. A third strike would surely defeat German Militarism.

The cartoon depiction of the *Kaiser* also played into the baseball metaphor. He was holding the sword like a baseball bat, but instead of swinging a baseball, he was playing with a human skull. While the baseball theme gave the poster an almost light-hearted and fun atmosphere, there was also an element of ominous foreboding. The blood-dripping sword of the Kaiser showed that for Germany this war was not a game but a deadly serious battle. Thus, the poster reminded Americans of the brutal and savage enemy they were facing.

The second poster was published in 1917/1918, titled *Defeat the Kaiser and his U-Boats* (Figure 10). In contrast to the *Strike Two* poster, which has a somewhat cheerful theme to it, this one speaks more to the darker side of the war. The poster's colors are dark and

200 Jakub Kazecki and Jason Lieblang, "Regression versus Progression: Fundamental Differences in German and American Posters of the First World War," in *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture*, ed. Pearl James (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 130.

immediately give the viewer a depressed and ominous feeling. On the right side stands a figure that is easily recognizable as the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. He wears the German military helmet and a heavy overcoat. His face is painted in a ghoulish green color. The *Kaiser* is looking out at the ocean where a silhouette of a presumably German submarine (U-boat) is visible. In the background of the poster are the remnants of a burning and sinking ship. The sky is orange, reflecting the blazing fire from the torpedoed ship.

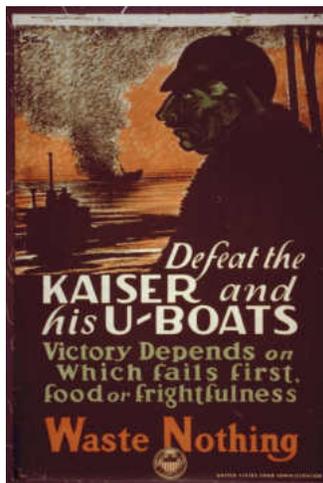


Fig. 10. *Defeat the Kaiser and his U-Boats*²⁰¹

This poster is an excellent example of the broad reach of the CPI. It was commissioned for the Food Administration to encourage the American public to save food for the war effort and “waste nothing.” Not only did the poster address the issue of saving food, but it also succeeded in associating wasting food with aiding the German enemy. The poster attempted to be educational and relay factual information. At the same time though, it also appealed to the public’s emotions. The poster’s scene was reminiscent of the sinking of

²⁰¹ United States Food Administration, *Defeat the Kaiser and his U-Boats*, 1917, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 2, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002712083/>.

the *Lusitania* in May 1915. It was a reminder of why America was fighting the German enemy. It implied that the German military was using unethical and unfair war tactics like submarine warfare. German U-Boats were lurking in the Atlantic, sinking ships that carried food, military troops, and other resources to Europe. The CPI exploited the general American abhorrence of submarine warfare, especially when innocent civilians were involved. Thus, the poster also elicited fear in the viewer by pointing to the responsibility Americans have when sending their doughboys across the U-Boat infested Atlantic. The overall despondent scene of the poster emphasized the severity of the situation and America's responsibility in the war. The poster also served as a battle cry encouraging Americans to enter the war and fight decisively to prevent further German submarine attacks on cargo ships. The ominous and dark atmosphere in war posters like this one was also repeated in Prohibition posters. While most Prohibition posters were in black and white, they still conveyed a dark and sinister message. Breweries were depicted as large, dark and sinister factories that wasted resources and produced only misery – depicted as a long line of downtrodden men labeled vice, poverty, crime, and disease. Similar to the war propaganda posters, it served as a battle cry to wake up Americans and fight against the German-dominated alcohol industry.

The last poster, *Destroy this Mad Brute*, was created by Harry R. Hopps in 1918 (Figure 11). The poster was used as a recruitment tool. It depicts a King Kong look-alike gorilla wearing a German-style military helmet with "Militarism" imprinted on it. The ape-like creature also sports a blond mustache, eerily similar to Kaiser Wilhelm II. The creature is drooling, his mouth is wide open, showing his teeth. He is holding a white woman in his left arm. She is partially wearing a light blue dress and is showing her bare breasts. The woman is covering her eyes with her right hand. The gorilla is holding a large wooden club

with the word *Kultur* (culture) printed on it in his right hand. Both hands of the gorilla and the club are bloody. In the background is the silhouette of a destroyed city. Between the city and the gorilla is a body of water, presumably the Atlantic Ocean. It seems that the gorilla just arrived on the shores of the United States, as “America” is printed under his feet.

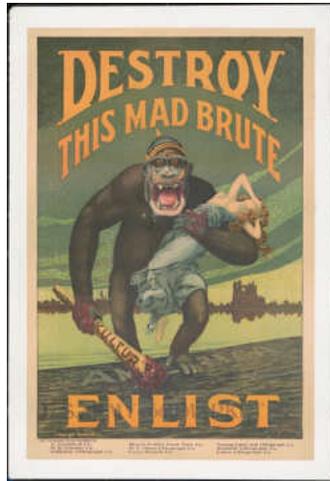


Fig. 11. *Destroy this Mad Brute*²⁰²

This was perhaps one of the most famous and best-known anti-German war propaganda posters. Similar to *Defeat the Kaiser*, the poster depicts a dark, scary, and ominous scene. The conflict was certainly not seen as a game anymore as in *Strike Two!*, but the war turned into a serious battle. The poster also appealed to Americans' emotions and played on the public's fears of a German invasion. In this case, the German brute has already arrived on America's shores. The idea that the enemy would be able to invade the US was a powerful tool designed to ensure renewed public support for the war effort. It also took away the sense of safety and security Americans felt by being geographically separated from

²⁰² Harry R. Hopps, *Destroy this mad Brute – Enlist*, 1918, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*, accessed December 2, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2010652057/>.

Europe. The home country seemed to be vulnerable to attacks. Although the threat of an actual invasion by German forces was low, by the time this poster was published in 1918, Germany had already resumed its unrestricted submarine warfare for over a year. The poster instilled fear that an invasion could happen if American men did not enlist.

While the real invasion threat remained low, the underlying message of this poster revealed that the enemy might already be in the country. The German brute had already set foot on American soil. Even more than the threat of an actual German invasion, Americans needed to be concerned with the enemy among them. This enemy was the millions of German-Americans who were suspected of being spies and traitors, as several CPI publications had conveyed. This poster's message was also decisively more anti-German than the other ones discussed. It set the tone of treating German-Americans with suspicion and viewing them as the enemy that needed to be destroyed. After all, German-Americans kept their customs and traditions from their home country, particularly their social drinking customs that did not meet the definition of culture for Anglo-Americans. Negatively portraying German-American cultural traditions played a significant role in the anti-German rhetoric during the war. The Prohibition campaign also used these images to its advantage, depicting German-American drinking culture as destructive and uncultured.

Thus, it was easy to make the connection between the gorilla-like German wielding the wooden bat *Kultur* and German-Americans with their different cultural traditions in the US. The poster also took a shot at Germany's pre-war reputation as a nation of artists and thinkers that were held in high esteem around the world and reminded viewers what German *Kultur* had evolved into. So-called German *Kultur* was very different from the American meaning of culture. Germans were depicted as uncivilized brutes that blindly followed

military order and enforced their way of life through brute force and violence. There was nothing civilized about Germans and their culture. German-Americans who held on to their traditions were therefore seen as uncivilized brutes as well.

The depiction of Germans as ape-like creatures was also compelling in the context of race. The depiction of the German enemy as ape-like brutes degraded Germans as sub-humans. Thus, it made it easier to vilify and fight people that were considered inferior. The white woman the German brute was holding hostage was not only a symbol of Germany's rape of Belgian women or invading German soldiers capturing Lady Liberty, but it also had racial connotations. The image suggested a call-to-arms to not only defend the US from the invading brutes but even more so to rescue white womanhood from the claws of an uncivilized ape-like enemy, which brings this poster in line with the message of the *It's Up to You* enlistment poster and the white slave narratives (Figure 4). White women were in danger of being defiled by the ape-like German enemy if white American men did not step up to defend them and America's honor. The specter of white women being abused by an invading force loomed large, especially given the prevalence and popularity of stories about white women being kidnapped and held in some form of sexual slavery. This powerful image was used to call on Americans to do their part, especially men.

The depiction of Germans as a gorilla-like ogre in *Destroy this Mad Brute* was unique to the CPI's anti-German propaganda posters. This author was not able to find other posters that showed Germans as ape-like beasts in the Library of Congress Collection or a general Internet search. However, when depicting Germans directly, the CPI posters attributed a general boor-like demeanor to the German enemy. Out of the 40 posters in the Library of Congress collection, a total of five portray the German enemy as an evil-looking oaf.

Appropriately titled, these posters reinforced the image of the German savage on the warpath. *Beat Back the Hun, Halt the Hun, Hun or Home, Keep the Hun Out, Remember Belgium* all showed the stereotypical sinister German getting ready to attack the doughboys, massacre innocent civilians, and threaten Americans at home.²⁰³ Although these numbers were small, and there is no quantitative measurement available to show the effect these posters had on the population, their impact cannot be underestimated. While one can only speculate how the public felt when looking at these posters throughout the war, they were clearly designed to arouse strong emotions. Even analyzing them one hundred years after the war ended evokes a strong sense of how people might have felt seeing them. Certainly, fear and terror come to mind, but also feelings of strong resolve to do whatever was necessary to stop the German beasts.

The message and depiction of anti-German war propaganda posters carried into other venues as well. While these posters circulated on billboards and were displayed at recruiting stations, shops, restaurants, and in magazines and newspapers, some anti-German images made it onto postcards. Bernhardt Wall designed patriotic postcards that portrayed typical German images to distribute the war message across the country.²⁰⁴ Wall's postcards depicted typical German symbols, one of the most recognizable being the *Dachshund*, wearing the German-style military helmet, the *Pickelhaube*. On Wall's postcards, the dog was also wearing the Iron Cross for a dog collar, thus perpetuating the stereotype. The *I Like Dogs, But Not This Breed* postcard exemplified how stereotypical German things were used as anti-German propaganda (Figure 12). Other postcards showed a hand with a red-white-

203 Library of Congress, Digital Collections, "Posters: World War I Posters," <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/?q=Hun>.

204 Bernhardt Wall Collection, Texas Archival Resources Online, Cushing Memorial Library, Texas A&M University, College Station, <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tamucush/00158/tamu-00158.html#bioghist>.

and-blue sleeve cuff crushing a *Dachshund* with its *Pickelhaube* on the back, and an American eagle landing on the dog and pummeling it to the ground.²⁰⁵ The message of these cards was clear. They encouraged all Americans to crush out the “Hun” and destroy any vestiges of German life.

Some Americans seemed to have taken the postcards quite literally as many *Dachshunde* were bludgeoned to death across the country.²⁰⁶ This German dog was a favored symbol for anti-German propaganda. The US Marine Corps used it on one of its recruitment posters, with a bulldog wearing an American-style doughboy helmet chasing a *Pickelhaube*-wearing *Dachshund*. The print *No Longer Friends*, created by Paul Stahr, was published in *Life Magazine* on July 4, 1918, and conjures up the ghost of past patriots (Figure 13). It shows a child (presumably a boy) holding a pistol and aiming it at his *Dachshund*. Behind the boy in the shadow of the wall is the outline of a colonial patriot holding up his sword. The child was merely imitating his patriotic forefather and was ready to defend his country against the invading Germans. Disturbing as this image may be, it is a powerful reminder of the impact the CPI’s anti-German propaganda campaign had.

205 CardCow.com, “Bernhardt Wall,” [https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow\[\]=Dogs](https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow[]=Dogs).

206 See Frederick C. Luebke’s *Bonds of Loyalty* for an excellent analysis of anti-German hysteria during World War I. Katja Wüstenbecker’s study, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg* provides a more recent account of the experiences of German-Americans during World War I.



Fig. 12. *I Like Dogs – But Not This Breed*²⁰⁷



Fig. 13. *No Longer Friends*²⁰⁸

Perhaps one of the most disturbing and gruesome examples of the anti-German propaganda material created was Barron Collier's *Patriotic Series*. The series mostly depicted the *Kaiser* as a devil-like creature and showed the him in charge of the Devil. The Devil was working for Germany, taking his orders from the *Kaiser*. Thus, the German emperor was more evil than the Devil himself. The inference here is that the *Kaiser* represented Germany and therefore, Germany was equally demonic, evil, and sinister. The titles of the individual prints reinforced the image of the *Kaiser* and Germany as an evil force. In *Times are hard*, Satan complains to the *Kaiser* that the German military was doing such an efficient job that Satan had nothing to do; in *Let Me Congratulate You*, Satan congratulates the *Kaiser*, who is portrayed as a look-a-like of the devil only distinguished by wearing his mustache and *Pickelhaube*, for a job well done (Figure 14). The *Kaiser* and his

207 Bernhardt Wall, *I Like Dogs – But Not This Breed*, accessed November 29, 2018, [https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow\[\]=Dogs](https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow[]=Dogs).

208 Paul Stahr, *No Longer Friends*, *Life* 72, no. 1862, July 4, 1918, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89063018717&view=1up&seq=5>.

German war machine have outdone the work of the devil. A third print in the series showed them tallying up the number of victims.²⁰⁹

At the same time, Collier successfully connected German customs and traditions to this culture of evil by employing the CPI's use of the word *Kultur* when describing Satan's work for Germany. One print showed a dead woman and child lying in the ruins of a bombed-out city, stating, "Kultur has passed here."²¹⁰ Thus, Collier equated the destruction wrought by the German army with German culture. Another cartoon played on the drinking habits of Germans by portraying a skeleton drinking blood out of a goblet (Figure 15). *A Toast to Kultur* showed Germans as the grim reaper, bringing deaths to hundreds of thousands of people. The grim reaper seemed to enjoy his goblet of blood, as it is overflowing and dripping down his robe. Drinking alcohol and killing people was seen as something that Germans enjoyed doing. Furthermore, this print in particular linked anti-German war propaganda to Prohibition. It offered a gruesome interpretation of how Americans viewed one of German-Americans' most treasured traditions, the conviviality of drinking. These images all helped to not only create the image of the vicious German but also perpetuated anti-German sentiments.

²⁰⁹ Collier's series of nine powerful images can be viewed at the Library of Congress Digital Collections, <https://www.loc.gov/photos/?fa=partof:prints+and+photographs+division%7Cpartof:posters:+world+war+i+posters&q=barron+collier>.

²¹⁰ Louis Raemaekers, *Kultur has passed here*, Library of Congress, Barron Collier Series of Patriotic Cartoons, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004666227/>.

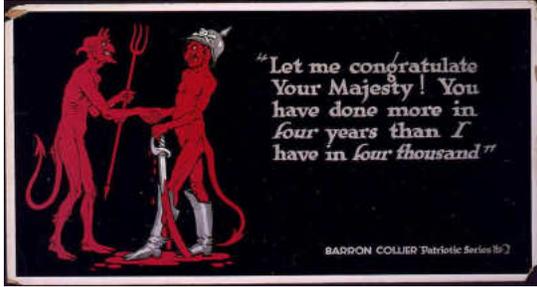


Fig. 14. *Let me congratulate Your Majesty!*²¹¹

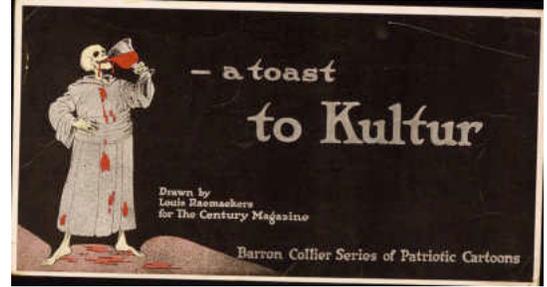


Fig.15. *A Toast to Kultur*²¹²

Given just this small selection of anti-German war propaganda posters, one can easily see how posters did not adhere to Creel's supposed ideal of educating the American public by using factual information. These posters appealed to people's emotions by using sensational images that de-humanized the German enemy. While the CPI emphasized that America was at war with Prussian Militarism and not the German people, one has to wonder if the American public was able to make that distinction. The propaganda caricatures of Germans as the Prussian Ogre, ape-like brute, or beastly Hun all helped to shape and encourage anti-German attitudes.²¹³

Anti-German War Propaganda and Prohibition

Anti-German World War I propaganda infiltrated another battle that was already raging at the time the US entered the Great War – the battle over the liquor and beer bottles, or more precisely, the battle waged by the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) to enact national Prohibition. In that sense, Prohibition represented the second front of the war against the

211 *Let me congratulate your majesty! You have done more in four years than I have in four thousand*, 1918, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections - Barron Collier Series of Patriotic Cartoons* accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3g02795/>.

212 Louis Raemaekers, *A Toast to Kultur*, 1916, Library of Congress, *Digital Collections - Barron Collier Series of Patriotic Cartoons* accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004666228/>.

213 Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind*, 180.

Germans. The ASL shrewdly used the anti-German sentiments during the war to further its campaign, thus encouraging and enforcing the idea to connect supporting the war effort and fighting the Germans with supporting Prohibition. Similar to World War I propaganda posters, the number of posters and cartoons that explicitly dealt with German-themed Prohibition issues was small. Out of 580 Prohibition cartoons found at the Anti-Saloon League Museum's website and The Ohio State University's Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements website, forty-one (or 7 percent) made specific references to Germans and their drinking culture.²¹⁴ Most of these cartoons related to the war and Germany's involvement in the brewing industry and were clearly influenced by the anti-German war propaganda posters. The overwhelming majority of the ASL cartoons targeted the liquor industry in general, depicting either a liquor dealer or saloon owner as someone who is taking advantage of his customers, showing images of liquor bottles with various warning labels on them, or picturing people kicking alcohol out of town. Perhaps revealingly, no other immigrant or ethnic groups were targeted. The depiction of the "typical" saloon patron was done in a way that did not indicate a particular ethnicity, as was done with the German brewers. Despite the small percentage of German-specific cartoons, the ASL cartoons proved to be a powerful tool that corroborated the image of German brewers and German-Americans as enemies of America.

Similar to the anti-German war propaganda posters, exact numbers of how many of the Prohibition posters that directly targeted German-Americans were printed remains unclear. The vast majority of the posters were produced by the ASL's own American Issue

214 "Anti-Saloon League Museum Cartoons and Fliers," Anti-Saloon League Museum, Westerville Public Library, <http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/CollectionViewPage.external?lang=eng&sp=1000138&suite=def>; *The Ohio Dry Campaign of 1917*, "Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements," The Ohio State University, <https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/ohiodry/brdsds>.

Publishing Company which produced several newspapers, magazines, books, and fliers that were distributed around the country. Prohibition material was also published in newspapers and magazines not affiliated with the ASL. According to the report by the General Manager of the American Issue Publishing Company, its main publication, *American Issue*, reached a circulation of 15.5 million copies in 1918.²¹⁵ Despite these numbers, it is difficult to gauge how the public perceived these publications. However, the ASL considered it vital to its campaign to include the German connection to the alcohol industry, especially during the war years. Thus, one could conclude that the anti-German Prohibition posters had a significant impact on the ASL campaign.

One of the most iconic and best-known ASL posters that connected the war to Prohibition (and used anti-German war propaganda in its anti-German beer brewers message) is the print entitled *The Evils of Booze* (Figure 16). Published by the Ohio Dry Campaign in 1917/1918, the cartoon provided an excellent visual example of how Germans were not only associated as an enemy of war but also as the US enemy in its fight against alcohol. The poster implied that the US was not only fighting the war against Germans in Europe but also waging war against Germans at home in the form of the German-dominated brewing industry and the German-Americans supporting them. The poster is a black and white cartoon depicting marching beer barrels, bottles, and cans. The depiction of the containers' faces was meant to evoke an association with Germans. Some wore mustaches that looked like the *Kaiser's*. A more telling sign that the ASL wanted viewers to associate the marchers with Germans was the prominent placing of the banner "Hun Rule Association" in the first row, leading the column of barrels and bottles. Other signs depicted alcohols' responsibility for

²¹⁵ Ernest H. Cherrington, "Twenty Eventful Years" (Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Company, 1930), 10, <http://www.westervillelibrary.org/File/Get/14686>.

society's ills: alcohol was the cause of crime and poverty, it destroyed families, and wasted valuable resources like grain.

The poster played well into the theme of anti-German sentiments that carried over from World War I to Prohibition. In it, the stereotypes of anti-German war propaganda were repeated and solidified. While propaganda posters portrayed Germans as uncivilized ape-like brutes, which had no regard for the civilized world, the ASL poster portrayed Germans as producers of alcoholic beverages invading the US. What Germany unsuccessfully tried in World War I, the German-American alcohol industry achieved without even firing a shot. German militarism was on display by the military-style parade of the barrels, bottles, and cans. The poster conveyed the message that perhaps sending US troops to Europe to fight Imperial Germany and die for the cause of freedom and liberty was in vain. After all, German militarism and *Kultur* seemed alive in the US, courtesy German-American alcohol producers. The poster's message was clear: while the war in Europe was raging on and demanded the full support of the country, the war at home to save American society from the evils of alcohol was just as important. American values and ideals had to be defended from the German-American invaders. As the *Destroy this Mad Brute* poster suggested, the enemies of America did not necessarily have to cross an ocean. Instead, the Prohibition poster implied that it was a homegrown army of German-American alcohol producers that had invaded American society and was trying to destroy it. Instead of poison gas, machine guns, and tanks, this enemy army used an even deadlier weapon – alcohol.



Fig. 16. *The Evils of Booze*²¹⁶

The connection of German brewers being agents of the *Kaiser* can also be seen in Andre Bowles *Kaiser's Best Friend in the United States* (Figure 17). The cartoon shows a heavy-set man with a Kaiser Wilhelm-style mustache sitting next to a table with a full beer glass and bottles labeled beer on the table. Behind the table boxes labeled beer and wine are stacked up. The cartoon did not only implicate the brewers in supporting the *Kaiser*, and thus Germany. Rather, the man in the cartoon stands as a symbol for everybody that drank beer. Through this cartoon, the ASL sent a powerful message. Anybody who supported drinking beer, from the beer brewers to the saloon owners to the individual patrons, in effect not only supported Germany's war effort but also was actively working for the *Kaiser*. By continuing their drinking habit, these people were aiding the enemy of the US.

Other cartoons from the ASL reinforced this theme of aiding and abetting the enemy by drinking beer. Twenty-one cartoons out of forty-one mentioned the *Kaiser* directly, and nine made an explicit connection between the brewers or beer drinkers and Germany.

²¹⁶ *The Evils of Booze*, *The Ohio Dry Campaign of 1917*, "Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements," The Ohio State University, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/ohiodry/brdsds>.

Cartoons such as *His hiding place*, *Happy Days*, *The trouble dispenser*, *His natural refuge*, or *The Liquor Traffic helps the Kaiser* all show beer breweries helping Germany's war effort.²¹⁷ In *His hiding place*, Kaiser Wilhelm is shown hiding behind a beer barrel. In an allusion to the Barron Collier *Patriotic Series*, a devil's tail is sticking out of the *Kaiser's* uniform, while his uniform reads "German interests in America." *Happy Days* depicts the *Kaiser* sitting around a table with his officers, lifting his beer glass in a toast to the US government for putting the distillers out of business but letting the German beer brewers use grain to continue brewing beer. *The trouble dispenser* is the synonym for the saloon owner, who serves his customer "German Poison," while a portrait of Kaiser Wilhelm looks over the bar. The saloon is tellingly called "Mexican Saloon" to remind the viewer of Germany's attempt to bring Mexico into the war. In *His natural refuge*, saloons are portrayed as the hiding place for German spies, and *The Liquor Traffic helps the Kaiser* depicts a brewery using grain to turn out more vice, crime, and poverty, thus hindering America's war effort. These powerful cartoons all sent a message that despite the brewers' reassurances of being loyal citizens, they could not be trusted. The brewing industry was disloyal, unpatriotic, and was aiding America's war enemy. Anybody supporting the brewers in any way was also considered un-American and helped Germany's war effort.

217 "Anti-Saloon League Museum Cartoons and Fliers," Anti-Saloon League Museum, Westerville Public Library, [http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/BrowsePage.external?lang=eng&sp=Qkaiser&sp=Rk1000138%40&sp=-1&sp=X&suite=def](http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/BrowsePage.external?lang=eng&sp=Qkaiser&sp=Rk1000138%40&sp=-1&sp=X&suite=def;); *The Ohio Dry Campaign of 1917*, "Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements," The Ohio State University, <https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/ohiodry/brdsds>.



Fig. 17. *Kaiser's Best Friend In the United States*²¹⁸

Who Do They Really Support?

The accusation that the German-dominated brewing industry supported German-American associations suspected of influencing American politics, hampered the US war effort, and supported their old home country was evident in another Ohio Dry Campaign poster from 1917/1918. The poster *Lager Uber Alles* shows a man sitting with his back to the viewer in a chair labeled “Liquor Traffic” (Figure 18). The man is smoking, another vice reformers of the early twentieth century deemed unhealthy and harmful, while writing a check. The check was originally made out to the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) but has been crossed out and instead is now made payable to “Hun Rule Association.” As discussed in chapter one, while the charter of the NGAA explicitly prohibited any direct political engagement such as supporting particular political candidates, the association was a vocal opponent of Prohibition. This poster referenced the close

218 Andee Bowles, *Kaiser's Best Friend in the United States*, July 28, 1917, *Anti-Saloon League Museum Cartoons and Fliers*, Westerville Public Library Anti-Saloon League Museum, accessed December 5, 2018, <http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/DigitalItemViewPage.external?lang=%09eng&sp=1048310&sp=T&sp=Pal%2CRk1000138%40%2CQkaisers+best+friend&suite=def>.

relationship between two associations (the *Lager Uber Alles* sign represents the USBA) that were integral in advancing the interests of German-Americans.

The ASL hoped to address and connect two issues through this poster: the loyalty and motives of the alcohol industry, the loyalty of German-Americans in general, and the connection between them. The apparent message of the poster is that the alcohol industry's loyalty is not only to its own product ("Lager Uber Alles" or "Lager Above All"), but even more so, their loyalty lies with the NGAA, and by extension, with Germany. The viewer could clearly see that the liquor industry was supporting and financing the NGAA. The US Senate would use this association and accused the NGAA of undermining the US government during its 1918 investigation. The Alliance was working hand in hand not only with the USBA but also doing the work of the German government. Thus, the liquor industry was guilty of being un-American and supporting disloyal activities. In this poster, the ASL also questioned the loyalty of German-Americans to the US. German-Americans dominated the beer brewing industry, they overwhelmingly opposed Prohibition, and they were members of the NGAA. Thus, to the ASL, German-Americans were just as disloyal and un-American as the alcohol industry.



Fig. 18. Lager Uber Alles²¹⁹

The ASL also used the language of the war in this poster to fight the alcohol industry, calling the German enemy the “Hun.” Here, the ASL equated the NGAA, whose primary mission was to promote and preserve German-American life and German culture in the US, with the war enemy. Moreover, through the USBA’s support of the NGAA, the poster also equated the brewers with the German enemy, the “Hun.” The ASL accused the NGAA of attempting to introduce “Hun” rule in the US with the financial backing of the USBA. Thus, the NGAA was operating under false pretense. Similar to *The Evils of Booze*, this poster also implied that the enemy was already in the US in the form of the alcohol industry. For the ASL, this enemy was not only the German-dominated alcohol industry and German-Americans but anybody who opposed Prohibition.

James Montgomery Flagg also addressed the topic of German-American loyalty in his work. His 1917 cartoon *Camouflage* astutely captured the portrayal of German-Americans as citizens with divided loyalty at best and at worst as the enemy (Figure 19).

²¹⁹ *The Liquor Traffic* says “Lager Uber Alles,” *The Ohio Dry Campaign of 1917*, “Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements,” The Ohio State University, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/ohiodry/brdsds>.

While *Camouflage* was intended as a war propaganda poster, it ties the issues of anti-German sentiments to Prohibition. The cartoon shows a man sitting in an armchair near a window. He is holding an American flag in his left hand and waving it outside the window. In his right hand, he holds a beer stein, cheering “Hoch Der Kaiser” (Hail to the *Kaiser*). Flagg employed the stereotypical characterization of German-Americans to easily identify the man. He portrayed the man as a typical German-American drunkard, who smokes a German-style pipe and overly enjoys the stereotypical German behavior of drinking beer.



Fig. 19. *Camouflage*²²⁰

The title of the cartoon expressed the supposed actions of German-Americans. Outwardly and in public, German-Americans proclaimed their loyalty to the US. They were publicly participating in displays of loyalty and effusively showed their supposed patriotism. However, in the privacy of their home, German-Americans displayed their true feelings. At

²²⁰ James Montgomery Flagg, *Camouflage*, as cited in Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 236, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://www.historyonthenet.com/authentichistory/1914-1920/2-homefront/4-hysteria/index.html>.

home, German-Americans supported their old home country, the Fatherland, and thus Imperial Germany. Cheering for the *Kaiser* indicated not just support and admiration for the *Kaiser* but also what Germany stood for through the *Kaiser's* rule: a militaristic and autocratic regime – or in the words of the ASL, “Hun Rule.” This support and display of their true feelings and allegiance also extended to any places where German-Americans meet: restaurants, saloons, beer halls, beer gardens, as well as private social gatherings with friends and families, and membership in German-American associations like the NGAA.

Camouflage unequivocally implied that German-Americans were willfully deceiving the American public. While German-Americans were hiding (camouflaging) their true intentions, the drawing exposed their true allegiance. Overall, German-Americans could not be trusted. While at best, their loyalties were divided between the US and Germany, at home and among other German-Americans their loyalty lay with their old home country. Even though they appeared as patriotic Americans in public, in their homes German-Americans maintained their German customs and traditions. This included drinking beer, and thus made them not only enemies of Prohibition, but German-American traditions also interfered with the war effort to conserve grain. Flagg’s *Camouflage* was a powerful cartoon that reinforced anti-German sentiments and stereotypes and helped fight Germans throughout the war and Prohibition.

Although the ASL cartoons generally attacked the German-dominated brewing industry, it was the implied guilt by association that extended the loyalty issue to German-Americans. *Ach – Nein – Ich bin ein loyol Zitizen* (Figure 20) was the only ASL cartoon in the ASL Museum collection that addressed the loyalty issue directly. It shows a German-American brewer, dressed in typical German fashion proclaiming his loyalty to the US.

While doing so, he is wearing the *Pickelhaube*, the prominent and popular symbol of American cartoonists to identify the German military. He is also standing beside stacks of grain sacks that list the amount of grain used by the brewers in 1917. Aside from making fun of the German accent in the title of the cartoon, the print reinforced the image of German-Americans having divided loyalties at best and secretly supporting Germany and working against the US at worst.



Fig. 20. Ach – Nein – Ich bin ein loyal Zitizen²²¹

221 Russell Henderson, *Ach – Nein – Ich bin ein loyal Zitizen*, 1918, Anti-Saloon League Museum, Westerville Public Library, <http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/DigitalItemViewPage.external?lang=eng&sp=1048174&sp=T&sp=Pal%2CRk1000138%40%2CQhenderson&suite=def>.

Conclusion

Anti-German rhetoric did not merely apply to war propaganda, but Prohibitionists adopted the CPI's successful anti-German message and applied it to their campaign against German-American beer brewers and German-American social traditions. Thus, the Prohibition campaign represented the second front of a war that targeted German-Americans at home. The vast amount of war propaganda material produced by the CPI aided Prohibition supporters and was used as a continuation of anti-German war propaganda in their fight against alcohol. While George Creel emphasized that the CPI's mission was to reach the American public through their minds and not through their emotions, the agency's work told a different story. In fact, the CPI used both approaches, factual information and appealing to emotions, to educate the public about the war effort and to unite the American population in the war effort. This turned out to be a winning combination. By using emotionally charged posters and matter-of-fact pamphlets, the CPI appealed to reason and emotion at the same time. Utilizing this strategy, the CPI succeeded in creating an image of the "uncivilized Hun" that needed to be defeated to save not only American civilization but also Europe. At times it seemed that the CPI publications served as a written narrative to support the emotionally charged posters instead of educating the American public about the war effort in a factual manner. While CPI publications and posters alike helped to create a unified message against Imperial Germany, they also created, encouraged, and maintained the image of the enemy at home – German-Americans.

The posters provided excellent visual examples of anti-German propaganda in the US during World War I and its extension to Prohibition. Using stereotypical German characteristics made German-Americans easily identifiable in these posters. The Prohibition

posters used these stereotypes to ensure that people made the connection between the German war enemy and German-Americans. The Prohibition posters examined clearly showed that they were modeled after the anti-German war rhetoric of the CPI's material to convey the same message: German-Americans were disloyal, unpatriotic, and treacherous. They could not be trusted. The Prohibition campaign continued these themes by emphasizing that German-Americans clung to their alien and uncivilized traditions, namely their social drinking habits, and were thus sabotaging the creation of a better American society.

When analyzing visual images, it is essential to look beyond the apparent meaning. While war propaganda posters foremost tried to influence public opinion by using visuals that evoked emotional responses, they also contained hidden messages. The war propaganda posters hoped to make the connection between Imperial Germany and German-Americans. The Prohibition posters continued with this message by connecting German-Americans to the German militarism of World War I. The CPI's work during the war set the stage for the anti-German image of Prohibition, thus linking the two campaigns together. It was a seemingly uninterrupted continuation of anti-German war sentiments into Prohibition. The posters succeeded in shaping American public opinion by creating anti-German sentiments that would survive long after the war ended.

Chapter III

German-American Reaction to Prohibition, 1917 to 1920

*“Our beer was taken from us, finally, because most of the brewers were Germans.”*²²²

This chapter takes a closer look at how German-Americans reacted to the impending national Prohibition after the United States entered World War I. Of course, German-Americans were not a homogenous group, nor were they a monolithic ethnic bloc, and some German-Americans supported temperance and prohibition movements. German-Americans not directly associated with the beer brewing industry held different opinions about Prohibition, shaped largely by their religious and ethnic background, and socio-economic class.

This chapter discusses the reactions of the German-American population in two cities, New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri, to Prohibition. The two cities not only differed in population size but also in the ethnic makeup of their citizens. By the mid-1850s, St. Louis was home to a diverse population that included descendants from French colonists and Native Americans, Americans from the East Coast and the South, a large free black population, as well as immigrants from England, Ireland, and Germany.²²³ These different ethnicities also contributed to St. Louis’ diverse social, economic, and political life. In contrast, New Ulm was founded exclusively by German settlers. This chapter analyzes German and English language newspapers from New Ulm and St. Louis to discuss the marked differences in the respective German-American populations’ responses to

222 “Fighting German Music,” *New Ulm Review*, November 5, 1919, 6.

223 “Peopling St. Louis: the Immigration Experience,” A Preservation Plan for St. Louis, Part I: Historic Contexts, City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office, 1995, <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/planning/cultural-resources/preservation-plan/Part-I-Peopling-St-Louis.cfm>.

Prohibition. While the chapter discusses newspapers from both towns, greater emphasis is devoted to New Ulm. The town's experience with the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS) was characterized by the Commission's hostility towards all things German and its zealous persecution of suspected disloyal and seditious behavior.

While the papers all opposed Prohibition, their arguments differed significantly. None of the papers perceived Prohibition as an anti-German measure, at least not publicly. However, the difference in the levels of cultural assimilation of German-Americans in the two cities shaped their arguments. The Turner philosophy of the more "segregated" New Ulm Germans influenced their approach to Prohibition, while the more integrated St. Louis Germans were mostly concerned with the economic fallout of Prohibition. Following their Turner heritage, and using the Turner principles to preserve their German heritage, the New Ulm Germans regarded personal liberty and individual freedom as the most pressing arguments in their opposition to Prohibition and fiercely defended these principles.

The Turners of New Ulm

As discussed in chapter one, German immigration to the US increased drastically after the failed March 1848 revolution. This failed revolution had a profound impact on the founding of New Ulm, as many of its founders were forced to flee Germany because of their strong belief in the ideals of personal, political, and economic liberty. The initial founding of New Ulm in 1854 can be traced to the Chicago Land Society, established by Frederick Beinhorn, who was looking to escape the city life of Chicago and organize a settler colony.²²⁴ Spurred on by a wave of anti-immigrant violence throughout the early 1850s, members of the

²²⁴ Daniel John Hoisington, *A German Town: A History of New Ulm, Minnesota* (Roseville, MN: Edinborough Press, 2004), 2.

society were eager to leave Chicago and establish a German colony. Although the town's first settlers were predominantly men, some families soon followed, and the initial settlement of New Ulm was fairly typical for establishing a new town. However, just a few years into the town's existence the arrival of new German settlers would shape its development and give the town its distinct Germanness.

At the same time that plans for New Ulm began to take shape and anti-immigrant violence continued, another German immigrant, William Pfaender, envisioned a settlement where Germans could live the way they wanted to and not face increased hostility and violence by Anglo-Americans. William Pfaender left southwestern Germany in 1848 for the United States. He settled in Cincinnati, where he was a founding member of the Cincinnati Turner Society.²²⁵ The Turners not only embodied the spirit of the failed 1848/49 revolution; in many cases they had played a leading role in the uprising. Founded in 1811 as gymnastic clubs (or *Turnvereine* in German, thus Turners) by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, they emphasized not only physical fitness but also provided a range of educational services to its male members, hoping to reform Germany's social and political system. In addition, the Turners emphasized a love of country and Germanness, were ardent supporters of a united Germany, and played an important role in the incipient German nationalist movement, with some German *Turnvereine* even establishing Turner militias.²²⁶ Since the Turners were politically educated, disciplined, and physically fit, they could be described as an intellectual paramilitary training organization that threatened Germany's existing social and political structures. Not surprisingly, the first Turner Societies in the US became known for their

225 Alice Felt Tyler, "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm," *Minnesota History* 30, no. 1 (March 1949), 350, 25.

226 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 8-11; Hoffman, "The American Turners," 120.

radical political and social views and were considered suspect because they attracted mainly German immigrants.

Pfaender's Turner convictions and the reality of anti-immigrant sentiments convinced him to establish a settlement where the physical and mental aspects of what he called "Practical Turnerism" could be practiced. He called on the members of the Cincinnati Turner Society to unite,

... for the establishment of a settlement, which, aside from the material welfare, would also offer the advantage that the insane, degrading, mortifying attempts of our Anglo-American taskmasters to restrict us could not operate, that, in a word, we would have the opportunity to enjoy unstintedly the rights guaranteed to us by the Constitution of the United States and to become happy and blessed after our own fashion.²²⁷

The Turners could only survive and thrive if they would separate and segregate themselves from the rest of American society. To finance his enterprise, Pfaender founded the Turner Colonization Society of Cincinnati in 1856, and within a short few months, after changing the name to Settlement Association of the Socialist Turner Society to further set themselves apart and attract more members, the society had about 1300 members and solid financial backing.²²⁸ While looking for a suitable place to start the Turner settlement, the society learned about New Ulm. After visiting the town in 1857, both societies (the Chicago Land Society and Pfaender's Settlement Association of the Socialist Turner Society) recognized the value of a joint venture and merged to form the German Land Company of Minnesota with William Pfaender as president.²²⁹

Although the area around New Ulm attracted immigrant settlers for homesteading, the New Ulm Germans preferred town life and the occupations that came with it. Aside from the

227 Tyler, "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm," 27.

228 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 12.

229 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 12.

family garden that provided fruits and vegetables, not many of them pursued large-scale farming. The establishment of New Ulm as a town and the professions its citizens practiced were in line with the Turner principle that emphasized education and intellectual and social stimulation.²³⁰ Within the first decade of New Ulm's existence, the town benefitted from the diverse occupational backgrounds of its citizens and developed an expanding and dynamic economy. New Ulm was fairly self-sufficient and boasted a sawmill, flour mill, several hotels and boarding houses, a fur-trading post, general stores, bakeries and butcher shops, two blacksmith shops, and two beer breweries and a distillery.²³¹

The town's German Land Company's charter also reflected its Turner heritage to promote "... trade and industry, the arts and sciences, and at the same time foster good German fellowship and the right spirit."²³² The Turners' ideal of equality was evident even in the layout of New Ulm and the similar lot sizes.²³³ Personal liberty was the center of political life. The Turners' emphasis on education was evident in not only the school but perhaps even more so in erecting the *Turnhalle* (gymnastic hall, Turner Hall) which "provided a social centre with political debates, lectures, Sunday schools and libraries for the further education of the German emigrants, and the attached restaurants or bars were popular places for German Gemütlichkeit."²³⁴ Thus, Turner Hall provided New Ulm citizens with a place to foster and preserve their German culture and traditions, as well as German nationalism.

While the first settlers embodied and adhered to the Turner spirit, subsequent settlers were more diverse. Germans continued to move to New Ulm, but just like the rest of the

230 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 8-9.

231 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 14-19.

232 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 12; Tyler, "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm," 33.

233 Dennis Gimmetstad, "Platting New Ulm," *Minnesota History* 56, no. 6 (Summer 1999), 350.

234 Hofmann, "The American Turners: their past and present," 122; Hoisington, *A German Town*, 15, 19; Tyler, "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm," 33.

country, the town also experienced an influx of new immigrants from eastern Europe. In New Ulm, these new immigrants were ethnic Germans from Bohemia who arrived in the 1870s, and by 1880 about 255 German-Bohemians called New Ulm their new home.²³⁵ While officially the Turners welcomed everybody and did not discriminate against newcomers, some of the established German families of New Ulm eyed the German-Bohemians with suspicion and looked down on them.

Although the Turners celebrated German culture, promoted German unity and nationalism, and wanted to increase the rights of people they deemed to be German, the Bohemian-Germans did not exactly fit into their vision of New Ulm. The German-Bohemians had a different ethnic, educational, and religious background and spoke a different dialect than the early settlers. Most of them came from rural villages and were peasants. They were also deeply religious, adhering to and practicing their Catholic faith. Thus the importance of religion in their everyday life stood in contrast to the freethinking Turners. The German-Bohemians of New Ulm represented the unskilled, peasant immigrants who came from pre-industrial societies. In this regard, the Turners of New Ulm reacted to the German-Bohemians in similar ways as the rest of the country treated peasant immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

While the German-Bohemians lived isolated from the rest of the town, New Ulm still changed rapidly from a freethinking Turner society to a more religiously diverse town. Although the town was known outside as a “community of free-thinkers and atheists,” and the original Chicago Land Company banned attorneys and ministers from its membership,

²³⁵ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 46.

New Ulm was a community open to all beliefs.²³⁶ While most of New Ulm's founders were freethinkers, the initial settlers also included Catholics and Methodists. A Catholic Mass was the first church service held in New Ulm in 1856, and by 1860 the town also included German Methodist and German Lutheran ministers.²³⁷ The influx of German-Bohemians and Scandinavian immigrants during the latter part of the century added to New Ulm's religious diversity. By 1900, New Ulm's population was evenly split: one-third were Lutherans, one-third were Catholics, and one-third were Turners with freethinking views.²³⁸

The founding of New Ulm represented the realization of a dream to create a German settlement that not only represented the Turner principles and values of equality, education, and religious and political freedom,²³⁹ but also the establishment of a community where the Turners could create their own version of their German homeland, and, in a sense, to indulge their German nationalism. While New Ulm represented a "clean slate" for the Turners, the area around it (and most of southwestern Minnesota) had long been a part of the Dakota hunting lands. Although the Dakota had lost some of their territories to the Chippewa, the increasing numbers of white settlers had a far greater impact on the Dakota's way of life. They were forced into a series of agreements to sell their hunting lands, with the last one signed in 1858, that required the sale of their last remaining land just north of New Ulm.²⁴⁰ This sale allowed for new settlements like New Ulm to expand and drastically increased the number of new white settlers, who depleted the natural resources that had allowed the Dakota

236 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 3, 21-22.

237 Tyler, "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm," 34.

238 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 107.

239 Jeanne Anderegg, "Pfaender, Wilhelm (1826-1905)," MNOPEdia, Minnesota Historical Society, Dec. 5, 2017, <http://www.mnopedia.org/person/pfaender-wilhelm-1826-1905>.

240 Karl Jakob Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux: Norwegians against Indians, 1862-1863*, trans. Melissa Gjellstad and Danielle Skjelver (Grand Forks: The Digital Press @ The University of North Dakota, 2015), 12-16.

to remain self-sufficient. Thus, the New Ulm Turner ideals of liberty, equality, and freedom seemed to only have meaning and importance to their own community and the preservation of their German heritage. In that sense, the Turners practiced not only German nationalism but, similar to other white settlers, settler colonialism.

New Ulm's Germanness would come to the forefront in 1881 when the town founded its chapter of the Sons of Hermann Lodge. The lodge was named after the German national hero Hermann the Cheruscan (also known as Arminius), who had defeated three Roman legions under General Varus at the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest. The veneration of Hermann flourished and expanded after the unification and creation of the German Empire in 1871, with so-called Hermann Monuments being erected across Germany.²⁴¹ When the idea of erecting a Hermann Monument in the US was proposed, New Ulm's lodge president argued that the statue should be built in New Ulm because the town "was a little German community struggling to do something for their nationality and to elevate the race."²⁴² Surprisingly, he convinced the national chapter, beating out major cities with larger German populations. A statement by New Ulm's city secretary highlighted the town's special qualifications that perhaps were responsible for bringing the Hermann Monument to New Ulm. He wrote, "New Ulm remains the most German of German cities ... Give this monument to the people who are still pure German."²⁴³ Even decades after leaving Germany, New Ulm citizens fostered German nationalism to a degree, that culminated in not merely preserving their Germanness, but even more so in erecting a monument that represented German nationalism outside their community. The reference of wanting "to elevate the race"

²⁴¹ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 66.

²⁴² Hoisington, *A German Town*, 67.

²⁴³ J. B. Velikanje as quoted in Hoisington, *A German Town*, 68.

and describing New Ulm Germans as “still pure German” highlighted the Turner’s connection to German nationalism and provided a glimpse into the racial beliefs that seemed to have migrated along with the other Turner ideals from Germany to Minnesota. For the New Ulm Germans, the monument served as a connection to their fellow Germans in their German homeland.

The statements were also problematic in how New Ulm Germans viewed themselves – they clearly segregated themselves and felt like they were living in a German diaspora. Thus, the monument also served as a symbol of Germans not wanting to assimilate. For New Ulm Germans, Hermann’s battle was similar to the Prohibition legislation threatening German customs and traditions. They saw their individual liberty of maintaining their Germanness threatened and infringed by state and federal intrusions into areas that were served by ethnic institutions, like the beer garden.²⁴⁴ In line with their Turner principles, they strongly believed they had the liberty and the right to pursue a German lifestyle unfettered.

The monument’s dedication in 1897 brought with it a weeklong celebration of all things German. During the dedication ceremony, speakers compared Hermann’s battle against the Roman Empire with New Ulm’s fight against the Dakota in 1862. The dedication ceremony came thirty-five years after the citizens of New Ulm successfully defended their town against attacks by the Dakota during the US – Dakota War of 1862. By the time the war broke out, the Dakota were left with a narrow strip of land north of New Ulm, leaving them unable to sustain themselves through hunting and relying on monetary and food

²⁴⁴ Speakers at the Hermann Monument’s dedication reminded the audience that “the meaning of the statue went beyond the desire to preserve the German language,” and that “the growing prohibition movement threatened German social customs.” As quoted in Hoisington, *A German Town*, 93-95.

disbursements by the US government.²⁴⁵ With their hunting grounds nearly decimated and facing severe food shortages, Dakota Indians appeared at the Yellow Medicine Indian Agency north of New Ulm during the summer of 1862 to negotiate their payments as promised in the sale agreement and treaty.²⁴⁶ However, in yet another breach of the treaty, the cash payments were not made directly to the Dakota but used to build schools and develop land projects. This was a common practice by the federal government designed to “civilize” American Indians by eradicating their traditional way of life. The remaining money was not paid out to the Dakota either but was dispersed to white traders who sold merchandise to the Dakota on credit at high-interest rates. Given this blatant treachery and mistreatment, some of the Dakota resorted to using force to hold the federal government to its treaty obligations.

The killing of immigrant settlers by four young Dakota warriors over a food dispute served as the starting point for the Dakota to attack both the Redwood Indian Agency (just outside of New Ulm) and the homes of white settlers across the region.²⁴⁷ At first, it looked like the Dakota had the upper hand. New Ulm was ill prepared for an attack, but after reinforcements arrived, the town prevailed, albeit only after over one hundred houses had been burnt to the ground.²⁴⁸ The Dakota surrendered a month after the battle of New Ulm. The violence that the Dakota exacted paled in comparison to the violence they had experienced throughout the 1800s at the hand of the federal government and increasing numbers of white settlers. Military tribunals found 303 Dakota warriors guilty and sentenced them to death by hanging. President Lincoln commuted most of the sentences, and in the end

245 Hoisington, *A German Town*, 4; Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux*, 12.

246 Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux*, 31-33.

247 Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux*, xii, 35-45.

248 Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux*, 84, 88.

thirty-eight Dakota were publicly hanged in Mankato, Minnesota, the largest mass execution in US history to date.²⁴⁹

New Ulm Germans understood their experience of the US – Dakota War and the subsequent erection of the Hermann Monument with the background of their Turner ideas to defend their interpretation of liberty and freedom. In the eyes of the dedication speakers, the actions and conduct of New Ulm citizens were not unlike those of Hermann; both (Hermann and New Ulm Germans) fought to defend their homes from what they perceived as “foreign” invaders and for the liberty of their people.²⁵⁰ It is telling that the New Ulm Germans viewed the Dakota in the same light as the Germanic tribes viewed the Romans – as foreign invaders – despite the fact that the settlers in New Ulm had invaded and were encroaching on the homelands of the Dakota. The New Ulm Germans claimed the right to live their lives the way they envisioned them in their “German town” but refused to extend the same right to the Dakota. The monument celebrated this attitude to a degree. In a sense, it also served as a reminder of the brutality that the Dakota experienced at the hands of the New Ulm Turners, who fiercely defended their rights to maintain their German heritage but did not extend the same rights of self-determination to the native population in their new home country.

The Germans of St. Louis

Compared to New Ulm, by the mid-1850s, St. Louis had a polyglot population. This was true even for the Germans who had arrived in larger numbers by the 1830s. These earlier German immigrants came predominantly from Saxon, followed a conservative brand of

²⁴⁹ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 40; Skarstein, *The War with the Sioux*, xiii, 163-168.

²⁵⁰ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 93.

Lutheranism, and while some of them were looking for farmland, most settled in the city.²⁵¹ By 1837, over 6000 Germans called St. Louis home. Germans arriving after 1850 found a well-established German community. Similar to the New Ulm Germans, the later immigrants brought with them a strong conviction for the ideals of liberty and freedom. By 1850, 43 percent of all St. Louis' citizens were born either in Ireland or Germany.²⁵² St. Louis also had a large free black population, which increased after the Civil War when formerly enslaved people left the South. Beginning with the 1870s, St. Louis also experienced an increase in immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Unlike New Ulm, St. Louis offered more economic opportunities for its new citizens and developed a distinctly international character with the various cultures coming in contact with each other. Thus, the city had a far greater ethnic diversity than New Ulm. Nevertheless, Germans retained a strong representation in St. Louis. In 1910, 27 percent of St. Louis' residents were either born in Germany or had at least one parent that was born in the old country.²⁵³ While the diverse population interacted with each other to a degree at work, they lived in neighborhoods segregated by ethnicity. The city was far less of a melting pot than one would expect and was more characterized by white supremacy.

St. Louis Germans had been a part of the city since the 1820s and were integrated into the city's social, economic, and political life. The city was home to several German-language newspapers; the *Westliche Post* was the most prominent daily newspaper and was published

251 "Peopling St. Louis: the Immigration Experience," A Preservation Plan for St. Louis, Part I: Historic Contexts, City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office, 1995, <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/planning/cultural-resources/preservation-plan/Part-I-Peopling-St-Louis.cfm>.

252 "Peopling St. Louis: the Immigration Experience," A Preservation Plan for St. Louis, Part I: Historic Contexts, City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office, 1995, <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/planning/cultural-resources/preservation-plan/Part-I-Peopling-St-Louis.cfm>.

253 David W. Detjen, *The Germans in Missouri, 1900-1918: Prohibition, Neutrality, and Assimilation* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985), 9.

from 1857 to 1938. To compare the reaction of German-Americans to wartime Prohibition in St. Louis in the German-language newspaper with their English counterpart, this chapter looks at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that began publishing in 1878. While the only period available for research of the *Westliche Post* was from July 1918 through June 1919, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* provided a longer time frame for analysis, from April 1917 through December 1919. The papers' approach to Prohibition is reflected in the assimilation and identification of German-Americans with American society. While St. Louis Germans maintained some of their customs and traditions – namely the conviviality of the beer garden, singing groups, and gymnastic clubs – they were mostly “stomach Germans.” As such, Prohibition was foremost seen as an economic obstruction that would negatively impact not only the German-dominated brewing industry but also the city as a whole.

New Ulm and the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety

Even before the United States officially entered World War I on April 6, 1917, German-Americans received increased attention regarding their loyalties and allegiance. In its November 1914 edition, *The Literary Digest* asked 400 newspaper editors across the country whether they favored Germany or the Allies in the war. Not surprisingly, pro-German sentiments followed the geographical distribution of German-Americans. Despite varying degrees of German support, Minnesota, in general, was leaning towards Germany. While Duluth was decidedly for the Allies, Minneapolis' sympathy was with the Germans, and St. Cloud was “almost unanimous for the Germans.”²⁵⁴ Support for Germany in the war was highest where German was still spoken and among German-Americans who encouraged

254 “American Sympathies in the War,” *The Literary Digest* XLIX, no. 20 (November 14, 1914): 941.

and maintained German culture and traditions. In Minnesota, German newspapers in particular were accused of devoting themselves to the cause of Germany from the start of the war.²⁵⁵ The 1928 work *Minnesota in the War with Germany* made it a point to emphasize, “St. Peter and New Ulm, particularly the latter, also supported the German cause.”²⁵⁶ Coupled with the state’s large Scandinavian population, which also tended to sympathize with the Germans, the number of potential sympathizers was even higher and, therefore, a cause for concern. Thus, it is not surprising that after the US entered the war and Wilson authorized the creation of state defense councils, Minnesota’s priority was its large population of German-Americans.

The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS) was created just ten days after the US entered World War I, and it quickly turned into what historian Carl H. Chrislock aptly named the “watchdog of loyalty.” It had far-reaching powers, ranging from the right to monitor the activities of immigrants, monitor the foreign-language press, assess the loyalty and patriotism of all citizens, and authority to remove elected officials from office if they were found to be disloyal or engaging in seditious behavior.²⁵⁷ Aside from being the government-sanctioned watchdog, the MCPS also expanded its role as a regulator of the liquor trade and ordered the revocation of liquor licenses, closed saloons, and limited operating hours of saloons and stores that sold alcoholic beverages.²⁵⁸ Since German-Americans dominated the beer brewing industry, regulating alcohol went hand in hand with

255 Franklin F. Holbrook and Livia Appel, *Minnesota in the War with Germany*, vol. 1 (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1928), 7.

256 Holbrook and Appel, *Minnesota in the War with Germany*, 13.

257 Robert M. Caulkins, “The Non Partisan League: Minnesota, North Dakota, Civil Liberties and the Struggle for Survival During World War I” (master’s thesis, University of ND, 2010), 62-63, 77; Carl H. Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991), 114.

258 Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 99; Charles Shandrew Ward, “The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety in World War I: Its Formation and Activities” (master’s thesis, University of MN, 1965), 47.

the commission's surveillance of Minnesota's German-American population.

Aside from issuing orders that prohibited or severely curtailed the consumption of alcohol, the Commission regarded the German-language press as a major subversive force that encouraged and spread pro-German sentiments. The MCPS also launched a propaganda campaign that emphasized the existence of German enemies living in Minnesota, thus alienating otherwise loyal German-Americans.²⁵⁹ To procure evidence to back its propaganda, the Commission employed Pinkerton Detectives to search for subversive activities in German-heavy communities like New Ulm.²⁶⁰ The Minnesota town attracted the attention and suspicion of the MCPS not only because of its ethnic heritage but even more so because it was founded by Turners, whose ideas and convictions were considered radical by the MCPS. New Ulm in particular developed a reputation as a refuge for German-American freethinkers who insisted on their right to preserve and maintain their German heritage and customs. Thus, New Ulm constituted a special case to the Commission that needed to be watched closely. On July 25, 1917, at a rally to discuss the draft of New Ulm men to fight in Europe, the MCPS finally got its chance to catch German-Americans in what the Commission perceived as overt acts of disloyalty and sedition.

The rally, organized by New Ulm mayor Louis Fritsche and city attorney Albert Pfaender (son of New Ulm founder William Pfaender), was intended to answer the public's questions about the draft and to quiet the spreading of unrest and calls for draft resistance.²⁶¹ While Albert Pfaender asserted the loyalty of German-Americans to the US, he also questioned the constitutionality of the current draft law. Knowing that New Ulm was already

²⁵⁹ Ward, "The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety in World War I," 76.

²⁶⁰ Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 117-121.

²⁶¹ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 131.

under surveillance by the MCPS, he urged men to comply with the current law but at the same time called on the “audience to work for legislation to limit overseas service to volunteers.”²⁶² Mayor Louis Fritsche supported the idea of sending a petition to Washington that would urge the government not to force conscripts to fight in Europe against their will, thus implying that German-Americans were hesitant to serve, had divided loyalties, and wanted to avoid “fratricide.”²⁶³ Albert Steinhauser, the editor of both New Ulm’s papers, the German-language *New Ulm Post* and the English-language *New Ulm Review*, strongly advocated for freedom of the press. He decried the powers of the MCPS as well as the government’s authority to deny mailing privileges to publications that it deemed seditious, subversive, or disloyal.²⁶⁴ Steinhauser publicly denounced the popular anti-German propaganda and was a bitter opponent against the vilification of all things German.²⁶⁵

The rally only reinforced the MCPS’ image of New Ulm as a stronghold of German sympathizers and cemented its reputation as pro-German and unpatriotic. Although New Ulm officials reaffirmed their loyalty to the US in the petition, the MCPS launched an investigation. The Commission summoned New Ulm officials, accused them of encouraging German-Americans to oppose the draft and refuse to register, and charged Fritsche, Pfaender, and Steinhauser with disloyalty, subversion, and sedition.²⁶⁶ In December 1917, the MCPS used its authority and removed Fritsche and Pfaender from their positions. The case against the editor of the *New Ulm Post* and *New Ulm Review*, Albert Steinhauser, was more severe. Since the foreign-language press was already on the radar of the MCPS for possible seditious

262 Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 134.

263 Caulkins, “The Non Partisan League,” 80; Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 133.

264 Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 136; Ward, “The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety,” 89.

265 Ward, “The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety,” 89-90.

266 Caulkins, “The Non Partisan League,” 80; Ward, “The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety,” 83-89.

and subversive publications, the MCPS used any situation to its full advantage to severely limit freedom of the press or prohibit any publications it deemed disloyal. However, the MCPS waited a full year after the July 1917 rally to bring its case against Steinhauser. He was arrested in August 1918, after members of New Ulm's Citizens' Loyalty League sent inflammatory articles from Steinhauser's papers to federal agents.²⁶⁷ In October 1918, the MCPS indicted him on eight counts of sedition, disloyalty, and publishing articles in violation of the Espionage Act.²⁶⁸ With the war coming to an end a month after his indictment, he was never brought to trial, and the charges were dropped.

The July 1917 rally and its aftermath seemed to strengthen Steinhauser's resolve to stand up against the MCPS. Although he was under scrutiny by the Commission, he continued to publish articles against US involvement in the war and against the popular vilification of all things German.²⁶⁹ As editor of both New Ulm papers, he was in a prominent, albeit precarious, position to voice his opinion and ardently defended the constitutional right of freedom of the press. Steinhauser's papers reminded the readers of the American ideals and values of freedom of speech, even in wartime. While he was undoubtedly aware that the MCPS was looking for any opportunity to silence and curtail him, it was not until a year after the rally that the Commission succeeded. It is in this light, with the background of the MCPS' investigation and charges that the reactions of the New Ulm papers must be analyzed. The events and aftermath of the July 1917 rally played a significant role in how New Ulm citizens publicly voiced their opinion not just about the war

²⁶⁷ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 139.

²⁶⁸ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 139; Christopher James Wright, "The impact of anti-German hysteria in New Ulm, Minnesota and Kitchener, Ontario: a comparative study" (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2011), 33.

²⁶⁹ Ward, "The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety," 90.

but also about Prohibition legislation.

New Ulm Germans' Reactions to War and Prohibition

New Ulm's unique history of being a town founded by Germans shaped by the Turner principles, as well as the town's experience with the MCPS, was the context that shaped the reactions of New Ulm citizens to wartime Prohibition and the continued anti-German propaganda. The New Ulm newspapers, guided by Albert Steinhauser, reflected the Turner spirit by continuing to uphold the ideals of political freedom and serving as a crucial tool to educate its citizens. With the US declaration of war on April 6, 1917, German-Americans in New Ulm focused on what that meant to them – now that their adopted country was officially at war with the country of their ethnic roots. Their public reactions to the US entry into World War I and the resulting national wartime Prohibition (the precursor and “dry run” of the Eighteenth Amendment) provided a unique perspective on how German-Americans in an overwhelmingly German town experienced these intertwined issues. Throughout the war, New Ulm continued publishing its German-language newspaper, the *New Ulm Post*, and its English counterpart, the *New Ulm Review*. Both papers were well established in the community. The *Post* began publishing as a weekly Friday paper in 1864, with the *Review* following in 1878 as a weekly Wednesday paper.

Both papers came out against Prohibition and throughout the war continued to publish their opinion openly. They voiced their anti-Prohibition stance through a variety of articles – a mix of those written by staff members and others reprinted from newspapers around the Midwest as well as New York. Perhaps surprisingly, for the period examined, there were not many letters to the editor or citizens' opinion pieces that covered Prohibition. Both papers

provided a space for the public to voice their opinions, albeit they appeared infrequently and not in every issue. The German-language *New Ulm Post* offered the *Briefkasten* (mailbox) as a public outlet for its readers to voice their opinions and concerns. Its limited usage indicated that readers were aware of the potential damage of speaking out publicly. Even before the July 1917 rally, German-language papers in Minnesota were already under surveillance by the MCPS. The Commission accused these papers of encouraging pro-German sentiments, claiming, “There would be fewer arguments and less statements made by the Germans if they were unable to get these papers.”²⁷⁰ The publisher of the New Ulm papers, Albert Steinhauser, as well as the readers, knew that they were under surveillance. While the average reader may have held back their public opinion about the war and Prohibition, Steinhauser did not. Articles that appeared in both New Ulm papers after the July 1917 rally indicated that Steinhauser seemed to have kept up his criticism of the MCPS, the war, and Prohibition.

During the first months after the US entered the war, the papers encouraged readers to keep their public Germanness at a minimum and do their patriotic duty to avoid MCPS’ scrutiny. These calls to caution were remarkably absent after the July rally. One could speculate that although Steinhauser was aware of his and the papers’ precarious situation, knowing that he could be charged with disloyalty and sedition at the mere whim of the MCPS, he simply realized that the damage to New Ulm was done. Perhaps his adherence to the Turner principles was so strong that he was willing to risk these charges. What seemed to be more likely is that Steinhauser’s background not only as New Ulm’s former city attorney but his military service shaped his decision to continue publishing articles critical of the US

²⁷⁰ Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty*, 119.

war entry. Steinhauser's military service during the Spanish-American War, where he was wounded in the Philippines, showed that any accusations by the MCPS of being unpatriotic and disloyal were unfounded. The publisher of the New Ulm's papers had proven his willingness to go to war and fight for his country. In Steinhauser's mind, his war experience gave him the authority to publish articles that attacked the MCPS' campaign against all things German, even at the risk of being charged with disloyalty and sedition.

The German-language *Post* seemed to be more of an advice column, where readers could dispense suggestions on any topic. Likewise, readers could also send letters to the paper, and the paper would then post its answer publicly in one of the next issues. The latter seemed to have been the more popular route. A week after the US entry into the war, the *Post* published a notice to its readers that the paper would not print or answer any letters that criticized President Wilson, his administration, or the policies of the US government. The paper clearly stated that readers should not send anything that criticized or opposed US government officials and policies.²⁷¹ The *Post* was keenly aware that as a foreign-language paper, but particularly as a German one, it was under scrutiny for potentially publishing material that could be deemed un-American or disloyal. Considering that the MCPS focused on German-language publications, as well as Steinhauser's outspoken criticism of that practice, this was not an unfounded concern. While Steinhauser was willing to risk being charged with sedition, he did not want to endanger his readers.

Subsequent issues revealed that the *Briefkasten* was not used as a place to post opinion but rather a spot where the paper answered readers' letters without posting the originals. Recurring topics covered the status and rights of German-Americans in the US, the

²⁷¹ *Briefkasten*, *New Ulm Post*, April 13, 1917, 6.

difference between “enemy” and “enemy alien,” sending mail to Germany during wartime, and advice on how to proceed to return to Germany.²⁷² These replies revealed what seemed to be the most important concern for some German-Americans in New Ulm during the war. While it is unclear if any of New Ulm Germans actually returned to Germany, the topics revealed that some of its citizens felt unwelcome in the US and at least sought advice on their legal status. This was a telling sign, considering that New Ulm was founded to establish a German enclave in order to be safe from nativist movements. Some New Ulm Germans did not feel at home even in their German town and contemplated returning to their old home country. Even though German-Americans established New Ulm so they could maintain their German lifestyle and traditions, they felt less secure about their ability to weather anti-German sentiments than the more culturally assimilated Germans in St. Louis. While New Ulm Germans seemed to have heeded the paper’s call not to send letters criticizing and opposing the US government, the paper’s replies hint at the concerns and even disapproval and discontent German-Americans in New Ulm had during the war. Of course, without publishing the original letters and by abbreviating the writers’ names with their initials, one has to be careful in assuming that New Ulm citizens actually wrote these questions to the *Post* to be answered, as it is possible the paper acted on its own. Given editor Albert Steinhauser’s stance and the MCPS’ surveillance of the paper, it is plausible that he wrote this column to criticize the anti-German atmosphere, especially replies published after the July 1917 rally. Nevertheless, the short replies provided crucial insight into the wartime concerns of the New Ulm Germans.

²⁷² *Briefkasten, New Ulm Post*, April 13, 1917, 6; May 4, 1917, 11; January 18, 1918, 6.

Steinhauser's English-language *New Ulm Review* offered readers the *Open Forum*, which appeared to be similar in structure to today's letter to the editor section. In contrast to the *Post*, the *New Ulm Review's* readers apparently took an active interest in the *Open Forum*. They actively used this platform to comment on issues regarding local politics, the war in general, local events, the status of German-Americans, and some light-hearted letters concerning nature and animals. Since the *Review* was published in English, perhaps readers felt freer to voice their opinions and not face the threat of supposed disloyalty. By actively corresponding with the English-language paper, the readers hoped to convince the MCPS of their loyalty and patriotism. It was also a way for Steinhauser to emphasize that his publications had nothing to hide from the MCPS. If nothing else, using English instead of German seemed to elicit a greater number of participants in the *Open Forum*.

Surprisingly, Prohibition did not seem to be a subject of concern to writers to the *Review*. Perhaps Prohibition did not affect the readers yet, and they had other, more pressing issues to worry about, such as the war and anti-German sentiments. Through the remainder of 1917, some of the writers voiced their disapproval of having their patriotism questioned simply because they were German-American.²⁷³ They felt unfairly singled out and sought to publicly defend not only the German-Americans of New Ulm but also the entire town. Instead of voicing their opinions about Prohibition, writers to the *Review* were far more interested in and outspoken about the politics of the Non-Partisan League (NPL), especially between 1918 and 1919. Readers felt an affinity for the NPL since the MCPS also targeted the NPL for disloyal behavior. Perhaps the NPL offered a safer outlet to discuss issues of loyalty and patriotism, although many of its supporters did not fare well during the war, and

²⁷³ *Open Forum, New Ulm Review*, April 18, 1917, 4; June 6, 1917, 4; August 15, 1917, 4.

showing support for the NPL as a German-American could be seen as even more suspicious. The NPL also shared some ideas and visions of the Turners. Some Turners openly supported Socialism, as did some of the NPL's founders. New Ulm had turned some of the more radical, socialist ideas of public/communal ownership into reality during the early years of the town, when the newspaper, mill, warehouse, and town store were held as common properties.²⁷⁴ In 1895, farmers founded the Cooperative Dairy Association. Thus, Turners and New Ulm citizens could sympathize with and support the political battles that the NPL fought during the mid to late-1910s.

To counterbalance any sentiments of disloyalty, the *Review* published "American Ideals" in the *Open Forum*. The article was supposedly written by a reader's friend from St. Paul, Minnesota, but it read more like an article that was released by the CPI. In it, the writer explained that the US was "... at war with their [German] autocracy and ready to establish American ideals of freedom and justice," and that Americans too needed to live up to those ideals.²⁷⁵ It was no accident that the *Review* posted this three-column long piece to dispel any suspicions of disloyalty among its readership. While readers of the *Review* participated on the opinion pages more frequently and in a more traditional manner than the *Post*, they too did not concern themselves with Prohibition. Instead, at least in the public forum of the *Review*, they went on with their regular concerns. At the time of the US entry into the war, the most pressing issue for the *Open Forum* was the status of German-Americans and the loyalty issue. Given that German-Americans were under scrutiny for any signs of anti-American behavior, one can understand the lack of letters to the newspapers to voice personal opposition to Prohibition publicly even in a town like New Ulm.

²⁷⁴ Hoisington, *A German Town*, 21.

²⁷⁵ "American Ideals," *Briefkasten, New Ulm Review*, June 6, 1917, 4.

The German-language *Post* in particular reminded readers throughout the first few weeks of the war to keep their mouths shut, to keep thoughts to themselves, and to silence their emotional attachment to Germany and follow the laws of the US. Encouraging its readers to keep a low profile, the *Post* urged German-Americans of New Ulm to do their patriotic duty and reminded them, “Now is not the time to display your German heritage!”²⁷⁶ One week after the US declaration of war, the *Post* extended its warning, reporting that the US government was sending informants into the beer halls and saloons to spy on the foreign population. If German-Americans in New Ulm thought they could trust their drinking friends and openly voice their opinion about the war and Prohibition, they needed to be careful, even in the sanctity and perceived safety of the local beer hall.

To root out any unpatriotic attitudes, the MCPS actively undermined the social meeting places of German-Americans. In the *New Ulm Review* issue of June 27, 1917, a letter to the editor by *Americus* addressed this issue. *Americus* attacked the purpose and tactics of the MCPS and accused it of operating in an autocratic style that outdid Germany’s militaristic rule. *Americus* further accused the Commission of violating the rights of citizens in the name of preserving liberty and fighting the war.²⁷⁷ The prevailing maxim for private citizens to keep quiet in regards to the war also seemed to extend to Prohibition. The Anti-Saloon League viewed anybody, but especially German-Americans, not supporting Prohibition as an agent of the *Kaiser* and charged them with committing treason against Wilson and the US. The *New Ulm Post* reported that Representative Jacob Meeker from

²⁷⁶ The *New Ulm Post* dispensed advice on proper patriotic behavior (in German) throughout its pages. The issues from April 6 and 13, 1917, and May 4, 1917 show an especially large amount of one-liners, short articles, and editorials. Some of them were expressed in typical Teutonic bluntness to address the seriousness of the issue: “Aushalten – Durchhalten – Maulhalten!” (Hold Out – Hang Tough – Shut Up!). Without a doubt, these were published to keep any charges of disloyalty to a minimum.

²⁷⁷ *Americus*, “That Safety Commission,” *New Ulm Review*, June 27, 1917, 6.

Missouri, “courageously stood up against the ASL and repudiated their tactics of vilifying anybody who had a different opinion about Prohibition.”²⁷⁸ In the writer’s opinion, Representative Meeker bravely expressed what the majority of his colleagues dared not to say for fear of retributions by the ASL.

The *New Ulm Post* and *New Ulm Review*’s reactions to Prohibition can be divided into three categories that reflected the greater national debate rather than Prohibition’s impact specifically on the German-American community. The papers attacked Prohibition in terms of 1) restriction of personal liberty, 2) economic consequences, and 3) anti-German sentiments. While the last point was an important one, it was not the primary, recurring argument the articles, editorials, and letters made in their opposition to Prohibition. Instead, the papers attempted to justify their anti-Prohibition stance by providing arguments that would appeal to a broader base and not just claim that Prohibition was yet another anti-German war propaganda tool.

Restriction of Personal Liberty

The overarching theme of the papers’ opposition to Prohibition was the issue of liberty and personal freedom. To the newspapers, Prohibition was the antithesis of the American ideal and its constitutionally guaranteed rights of liberty. The *Post* and *Review* stressed the issue of personal freedom to remind the citizens of New Ulm of the sacrifices their forefathers had made to live and prosper in freedom. Many of the founders of New Ulm fled Germany after the failed 1848/49 revolution and sought refuge in America, a country that embodied not only their vision of a Republic that treasured freedom and liberty but also

²⁷⁸ *New Ulm Post*, July 5, 1918.

the Turners' principles. Thus, the papers were using the Turners' ideals of freedom and liberty to remind readers that American virtues were synonymous with Turner ideals. In that sense, the New Ulm Germans tried to make their ethnic distinctiveness, their practical Turnerism, and their German heritage more palatable to Americans. By emphasizing the close relationship between Turner and American ideals, they also tried to convince Anglo-Americans of their loyalty to the specific American values for which President Wilson argued the US was fighting.

Defending the values of freedom and liberty were not hollow words for New Ulm Germans. Some of them had fought in the 1848/49 revolution in Germany against state armies. After arriving in the US, many of them also fought in the American Civil War to preserve the Union and the ideals for which it stood. A reprint in the *Review* of an editorial run in the *New York World* on August 14, 1917, brought the war some New Ulm citizens fought to preserve the Union back to life. It reminded its readers of the parallels between the current Prohibition states and the former slave states. Just like the slave states, Prohibition states were trying to force their will on the rest of the Union. The editorial charged that "At a time when the most solemn duty of Congress is to promote American unity and concentrate its energies on the winning of the war, a new subject of national discord is created by the insistence of the Prohibition lobby and the failure of the Senate to measure up to its great responsibilities."²⁷⁹ Congress was being held hostage by the Prohibition lobby to impose the will of a minority on the majority by making their belief in individual abstinence the supreme law of the land and fully regulate the personal habits of the entire population.

279 "Newspaper Draws Deadly Parallel," *New Ulm Review*, August 15, 1917.

Generally, for the New Ulm papers Prohibition was not just merely an infringement of personal rights. Nor did the concept of Prohibition just contradict Turner principles. In their view, Prohibition was also un-American because it took away the personal freedoms and individual liberties guaranteed by the US Constitution and created a network of informants that would oversee the enforcement of Prohibition. To that end, the papers made sure to educate their readers about Prohibition legislation in other states. They also printed so-called personal experiences of people that lived in dry states. A woman in Spokane, Washington, shared her experience with Prohibition. She lamented that with Prohibition came a complete loss of freedom and personal liberty, as well as a loss of privacy.²⁸⁰ Her letter painted a bleak picture of what life under Prohibition was like. Before Prohibition, nobody took an interest in other people's behavior, but now everybody was spying on each other. According to her, Prohibition caused an increase in alcoholism and drunkenness, the very vices its supporters hoped to eradicate. To combat the rise, the city of Spokane was contemplating the prohibition of other social activities, such as shutting down pool halls, prohibiting card games, and even banning playing tennis. The letter writer suggested that once national Prohibition would be enacted, the federal government would probably embark on a prohibition crusade that included other habits and activities deemed harmful to individuals.

The issue of personal liberty and freedom was again emphasized by the *Review* on May 21, 1919, when it called to revoke the impending wartime Prohibition on the grounds that most people who drink alcohol do so without any harm to themselves or others.²⁸¹ The writer argued that “harmless drinkers should not be persecuted through official repression of

280 “Wirkung der Prohibition,” *New Ulm Post*, August 30, 1918, 5.

281 “Revoke the War-Time Dry Act,” *New Ulm Review*, May 21, 1919, 4.

their essential innocent appetite.” With the war being over, there would be no need for wartime Prohibition, and the government had no right to interfere in and prohibit people’s personal activities. The New Ulm papers used these real-life Prohibition experiences to remind their readers of the negative consequences of Prohibition and the loss of personal freedom.

No Beer – No Work in New Ulm

For the New Ulm papers, the real enemies of the country were therefore not the anti-Prohibitionists but the ASL and its army of Prohibition supporters. During the summer of 1918, both papers continued to report on opposition to Prohibition on the basis of personal rights. They paid close attention to the working class’ sentiments regarding the war and Prohibition. Both papers reported about New Ulm union members organizing a mass demonstration to protest Prohibition at the end of June 1918. At the following meeting in the armory, the main speaker attested to the loyalty of New Ulm citizens and reaffirmed organized labor’s opposition to Prohibition because it violated personal freedom.²⁸² The English-language *Review* covered the organized workers of New Ulm in greater detail in its July 3, 1918, issue. The union members pledged loyalty to the US and support for the war effort but opposed Prohibition and pledged to send an official protest note to Congress.²⁸³ Organized labor in New Ulm resolved that Prohibition strikes at the root of liberty and that the people urging and pushing Prohibition were among labor’s greatest enemies.²⁸⁴ New Ulm

282 “Große Arbeiterdemonstration,” *New Ulm Post*, June 28, 1918.

283 “Union Labor Here Shows Strength,” *New Ulm Review*, July 3, 1918.

284 “Union Labor Here Shows Strength.”

workers joined the battle cry of organized labor across the country as wartime Prohibition approached.

The “No Beer – No Work!” campaign by unions nationwide fell on receptive ears in New Ulm. Unions in New Jersey first proposed the campaign, and by February 1919, the Central Federated Union of New York put the campaign up for a vote to its members. The unions argued that the impending prohibition of beer and wine was “primarily aimed at the working class.”²⁸⁵ Organized labor did not regard Prohibition as an exclusive issue of ethnic customs and traditions, but rather saw it as an attack on the economic livelihood and social customs of the working class. At the same time, the unions highlighted labor’s contribution to the war effort, pointing out that many workers had fought on the front lines for democracy, only to return to their country to see “... the liberty and freedom formerly enjoyed by these fighters for democracy are crushed even without an opportunity to voice opinions or desires as free men.”²⁸⁶ Thus, for the unions, Prohibition represented an infringement on the working class’ personal liberty and freedom, rather than a specific ethnic issue. The New Ulm papers shared these sentiments when they reported about the “No Beer – No Work!” campaign. A full five months before wartime Prohibition went into effect, the *Post* printed an article on the proposed nationwide strike on July 1, 1919 – the first day of wartime Prohibition. Unions were calling for a nationwide strike if light wines and beer were not exempted from Prohibition, beverages which the unions claimed were not intoxicating.²⁸⁷ On June 20, 1919, the *Post* reported that during anti-Prohibition demonstrations in Washington, D.C., the American Federation of Labor (AFL) demanded that the government allow the production

285 “Moves to strike for Beer on July 1,” *New York Times*, February 12, 1919, 1.

286 “Moves to strike for Beer on July 1.”

287 “Kein Bier, keine Arbeit,” *New Ulm Post*, February 21, 1919, 8.

and sale of light wines and beer until the Prohibition Amendment would go into effect. Thus, the papers supported the overall national sentiments of organized labor and affirmed New Ulm workers' opposition to Prohibition.

Wartime Prohibition

The issue of personal liberty became especially prevalent after the war ended, although the *Post* wrote several articles on the matter during the first year of America's involvement in the war. As early as May 1917, the *Post* was musing over the prospect of wartime Prohibition due to the entry of the US into World War I. The writer believed that the government would introduce the measure as a pretext to save grain for the war effort and cautioned the reader not to be surprised if wartime Prohibition was to happen as Senator Albert Cummins from Iowa had already introduced a measure to prohibit brewing and distillation during the war.²⁸⁸ Three months later, the *Post* reprinted an article from the *Chicago Tribune* (in English) that questioned the real motive of wartime Prohibition. While the article agreed that there should be some wartime Prohibition, it opposed total Prohibition and stated that the problem lay with whiskey and distilled spirits and not with light wines and beer.²⁸⁹ The real reason for wartime Prohibition was revealed when the chairman of the ASL's campaign committee conceded that wartime Prohibition was meant to expedite the constitutional amendment for national Prohibition.²⁹⁰ Judging by the articles in both papers, most citizens of New Ulm initially accepted wartime Prohibition as a necessary evil to

288 "Kriegs-Prohibition," *New Ulm Post*, May 4, 1917, 6.

289 "Bone Dry," *New Ulm Post*, August 3, 1917, 10.

290 "Text des ProhibitionsAmendments," *New Ulm Post*, September 13, 1918, 8.

conserve grain for the war effort. However, once the war ended, they opposed its implementation, as the supposed reason for Prohibition was no longer operative.

New Ulm citizens were hoping that with the end of hostilities and the armistice in place, the US government would lift wartime restrictions on alcohol as well as abrogate the implementation of wartime Prohibition, set to go in effect in July 1919. People thought they would be able to legally enjoy alcoholic beverages until the national Prohibition Amendment was enacted. The papers now felt it was safe to oppose Prohibition more forcefully since the war had ended and accusations of being unpatriotic and disloyal diminished. On April 4, 1919, the *New Ulm Post* printed a translated article from the *New York World* accusing Congress of passing the Prohibition law under false pretense as a wartime measure. The Prohibitionists deceived and abused the public's willingness to sacrifice for the war effort for their own anti-alcohol agenda. Thus, according to the *New York World*, the Prohibition law was an illegal and dishonest move that represented nothing less than a treacherous act against the American people.

The *New Ulm Review* also rallied around calls to revoke wartime Prohibition, stating that "The alleged necessity of the prohibition of the sale of liquor on and after July 1st is passed."²⁹¹ Since the war ended and the armistice had gone into effect, there was no shortage of grain and thus no need to conserve food resources. The *Review* went so far to call the Prohibition legislation oppressive and, echoing the *New York World*, claimed that the war and patriotism were used as an excuse to enact Prohibition legislation desired by a few fanatics.²⁹² There was no justification for wartime Prohibition between July 1919 and the inception of national Prohibition in January 1920. The *Review* continued pressing the issue of

291 "Revoke the War-Time Dry Act," *New Ulm Review*, May 21, 1919, 4.

292 "Revoke the War-Time Dry Act," *New Ulm Review*, May 21, 1919, 4.

revoking wartime Prohibition. A month after it went into effect, the paper printed a biting paragraph denouncing the law as fraudulent, for the law “was passed nine days after the armistice was signed, ostensibly for the purpose of winning a war that had already been won.”²⁹³ Since Congress was refusing to repeal wartime Prohibition, it was clear to the *Review* that the law was passed solely for the sake of forcing Prohibition on the American people, and not as a measure to win the war. With time running out before the Eighteenth Amendment would go into effect, the *Review* published another article on November 5, 1919, claiming that Prohibition rested on a false basis and would not last and that common sense and common justice would return. In what sounded like a last-minute desperate attempt to voice its opposition, the paper called the impending national Prohibition “organized tyranny” that was only possible because of the war. Prohibition was pushed through “on a false wave of agitation masquerading as patriotism,”²⁹⁴ abusing the willingness of the American people to make sacrifices to win the war. While these last-minute attempts were compelling examples of publicly voicing opposition to Prohibition, both papers were aware that they were also futile. By November 1919 the nation was a mere two months away from becoming officially dry.

Economic Consequences

Aside from attacking Prohibition legislation as un-American and something that took away two of the most important foundations of the country, namely individual liberty and freedom, and questioning the true motives of enacting Prohibition, the New Ulm papers also educated their readers about the consequences of the new constitutional amendment. One of

²⁹³ *New Ulm Review*, August 6, 1919, 3.

²⁹⁴ “The Tyranny of Prohibition,” *New Ulm Review*, November 5, 1919, 6.

the apparent side effects of Prohibition was the loss of tax income to the US government coupled with the additional cost of funding enforcement. On the day the US entered the war, the *New Ulm Post* argued that national Prohibition was not economically feasible because of the cost of enforcing the new law. Besides creating an “army of agents” needed to seek out and destroy illegal alcohol production (reports from mostly southern dry states showed how widespread such production was), additional government employees would be essential to enforce the Prohibition law.²⁹⁵ This added expense would come at a time when the government was losing vital tax income because of the Prohibition law. The *New Ulm Review* highlighted the brewers and distillers’ economic importance to the nation’s treasury by claiming that the alcohol industry contributed almost 20 percent of the total amount of taxes collected in 1915.²⁹⁶ While the article did not mention that the brewers and distillers’ tax contributions had since declined (in part due to the increase of states enacting Prohibition but even more so due to the ratification of the federal income tax constitutional amendment in 1913), it did raise the critical aspect of lost federal revenue. The *Post* echoed this sentiment by emphasizing that the federal government was still collecting a substantial amount of money from the alcohol-producing industry, which could be the saving grace for the brewing industry.²⁹⁷ The article proposed that the government could not afford to lose that source of income, especially since entering the war had added another set of massive expenses. Thus, the article was cautiously optimistic that the government now more than ever (in 1917) was dependent on the taxes from the brewing industry to finance the war effort and thus would not pursue prohibition.

295 “Theorie und Praxis,” *New Ulm Post*, April 6, 1917, 6.

296 “Brewing Industry Profit to Nation,” *New Ulm Review*, April 25, 1917, 8.

297 “Kriegs-Prohibition,” *New Ulm Post*, May 4, 1917, 6.

The specter of economic consequences in the form of lost tax revenue not only impacted the federal government but also constituted a threat to the employees of the brewing industry as well as supporting industries. The inception of Prohibition of any kind meant the loss of jobs and income in the brewing and distilling industries, as well as in supporting industries like barrel making, glass bottle manufacturing, but also the paper industry (labels for bottles) and even newspaper advertising. The issue of increased unemployment due to Prohibition was addressed during the New Ulm labor unions meeting at the end of June 1918. The *New Ulm Review* reported that the unions strongly opposed the prohibition of wine and beer during wartime, as it would “bring misery and unemployment to over a million workers.”²⁹⁸ Two months later, the citizens of New Ulm received notification that “misery and unemployment” would come to their town. The *Review* reported that President Wilson’s order to suppress beer brewing beginning December 1, 1918, would “seriously affect one of New Ulm’s largest industries.”²⁹⁹ Not only would the city’s two breweries (Hauenstein and Schell) lose about \$400,000 in revenue, but at least fifty workers would find themselves unemployed. The paper emphasized that the number of unemployed workers did not include employees of the local saloons, who undoubtedly would also be affected by Wilson’s order. Thus, wartime Prohibition of wine and beer alone would already impact New Ulm’s citizens and its economy.

Losing a Mainstay of German Tradition

The closure of the Hauenstein Brewing Company and the Schell Brewing Company due to the prohibition of beer brewing beginning December 1, 1918, made the front-page

²⁹⁸ “Union Labor Here Shows Strength,” *New Ulm Review*, July 3, 1918.

²⁹⁹ “Order Will Halt City’s Breweries,” *New Ulm Review*, September 11, 1918.

news in the *New Ulm Post* on December 6, 1918. The paper pointed out that it was the first time in both companies' history that their operations had been forced to shut down. The immediate result of the closure was the loss of thirty jobs, with another twenty-five workers to be laid off once the remaining beer supply was exhausted.³⁰⁰ The paper noted that it would be difficult for the brewery workers to find new jobs. Unlike its St. Louis' counterparts, the *Post* did not suggest any community relief measures to help the unemployed workers. This was surprising, given that the breweries represented one of the largest employers in town. While the paper lamented the loss of employment, it blamed Prohibition laws for the closure. Thus, it was the government's place to provide relief since it passed the Prohibition legislation, which forced breweries to shut down and lay off workers. In comparison, the St. Louis papers took a more active role by calling its readership to help the unemployed brewery workers. This open call illustrated a much more Americanized relief measure, to help one's neighbor in times of need. This is not to say that New Ulm Germans did not help each other in times of need. The *Post* did not criticize the breweries for lack of preparedness to deal with the closure by possibly retooling their operations. Instead, the paper excused the breweries' decision by pointing out that both factories could not be used for anything else since they were located too far out of town.³⁰¹ In a sense, shutting down operations completely seemed to have been the only choice for the breweries.

Throughout the following weeks, the *Post* addressed the issue of unemployment in the brewing industry. An article from January 31, 1919, warned that 25,000 brewery workers in the Midwest alone could face unemployment if the Prohibition laws were not altered to allow for the brewing of beer. While the big brewing companies had not laid off any workers

300 "Zwei New Ulmer Anlagen geschlossen," *New Ulm Post*, December 6, 1918.

301 "Zwei New Ulmer Anlagen geschlossen."

yet in the hopes of being able to continue their production, the article painted a clear picture of what mass layoffs in the brewing industry entailed – labor unrest.³⁰² A month later, the *Post* reported on labor unions’ plans to organize a general strike on July 1, 1919, if light wine and beer were not excluded from the Prohibition legislation. The article stressed that hundreds of thousands of workers would lose their jobs and be pushed into an already oversaturated labor market, thus increasing unemployment and driving men and their families into misery.³⁰³ The article painted a clear picture of the unintended consequences of Prohibition. It was not difficult to imagine that thousands of laid-off workers across the nation would take to the streets to demand jobs. In that sense, the *Post* implied that Prohibition would bring greater disruption and discord to the country than what it hoped to remedy.

Prohibition as Anti-German Measure

So far, the reactions to Prohibition in the *New Ulm Post* and *New Ulm Review* focused in greater detail on the aspects of losing personal liberty and freedom and the economic consequences of the Prohibition legislation. Given the overall anti-German sentiments during the war and New Ulm’s precarious relationship with the MCPS, especially in the aftermath of the July 1917 rally, it was perhaps no surprise that the town’s papers emphasized reasons to oppose Prohibition that would not attract any more attention to German-Americans. Rather, the papers approached their opposition to Prohibition from a non-ethnic standpoint, emphasizing that Prohibition contradicted American ideals and virtues of liberty. At the same time, these American ideals were synonymous with the Turner principles. Thus, New Ulm

³⁰² *New Ulm Post*, January 31, 1919, 4.

³⁰³ *New Ulm Post*, February 21, 1919, 8.

papers were appealing to both German Turner descendants and their non-German neighbors.

However, both newspapers published a few articles that attempted to make the connection between anti-German war sentiments and Prohibition. A week after the US entry into the war, the *Post* warned its readers to be careful in restaurants, saloons, clubhouses, and other places where German organizations meet since agents of the federal government were watching these places.³⁰⁴ This warning was also a concealed criticism that the federal government was encroaching on German traditions and customs. It implied that German-Americans' meeting places (public and private) were not safe from government surveillance. Moreover, German-Americans were singled out for keeping, cultivating, and cherishing their habits and customs. Barely a month after the US entry into the war, a short opinion letter to the *Post* recognized the underlying meaning of the threat of government surveillance of German-American venues and the possibility of wartime Prohibition. The writer, named *Vereinsmeier* (roughly translated club joiner), opined that if wartime Prohibition would be enacted, and in the writer's view there was an increased chance of it, then this would also affect German club life.³⁰⁵ In his view, wartime Prohibition would negatively affect German club life because breweries would only be allowed to produce "Near Beer." According to *Vereinsmeier*, that beverage was not deserving of being called beer, as it was simply undrinkable. *Vereinsmeier* also mused that wartime Prohibition would end German club life and German customs because drinking good beer during social get-togethers was not only enjoyable but also a big part of German culture. While it was not entirely clear if the writer meant this letter to be read seriously, it addressed the role beer played in German culture and in maintaining German cultural traditions.

304 "Nochmals: Haltet den Mund!" *New Ulm Post*, April 13, 1917.

305 "Briefkasten – Vereinsmeier," *New Ulm Post*, May 4, 1917, 11.

The *New Ulm Review* also pointed out the connection between the surveillance of German social life and the brewing industry. In its *Open Forum*, the writer *Americus* mainly attacked the legality and intimidation tactics of the Minnesota Public Safety Commission. *Americus* also mentioned that the Commission was working with the ASL and picked out the German-American brewers, “always the scapegoats,” in an attempt to tie them to just about any “suspicious” activity in the state.³⁰⁶ A year later, the *New Ulm Post* reported that Representative Jacob Meeker from Missouri countered accusations by the ASL that not just the alcohol industry directly but anybody who was not in favor of Prohibition was an agent of the *Kaiser*, as baseless and unpatriotic.³⁰⁷ The ASL aimed to sow discord and suspicion against German-Americans with these accusations.

News about the restrictions imposed on German customs and traditions made it across the Atlantic into newspapers in Germany. The *New Ulm Post* reprinted an article from the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* on June 28, 1918, warning that the US government was destroying all things German in the US. According to the article, President Wilson was hoping to suppress the German elements in the US. While the article could be seen as German war propaganda, it correctly pointed out that German associations in the US were viewed with deep suspicion. The article further lamented that German clubs and associations had to abandon their Germanness in order to survive.³⁰⁸ Printing an article from a German newspaper was one way of expressing the view of wartime treatment of German-Americans, even though the *Post* was running the risk of being considered treasonous. While officially this article could be explained as German war propaganda that was seeking to incite German-

306 *Americus*, “That Safety Commission,” *New Ulm Review*, June 27, 1917, 4.

307 “Meeker dreht den Spieß um,” *New Ulm Post*, July 5, 1918, 4.

308 *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, “Der Zusammenbruch alles Deutschen in Amerika,” in *New Ulm Post*, June 28, 1918, 8.

Americans, it could also be seen as reflecting opinions in the German-American community. It was safer to express them by way of reprinting an article from a German newspaper than presenting them as the *New Ulm Post's* own opinion.

The strongest reaction to the impending national Prohibition and its anti-German stance came two months before the Eighteenth Amendment became the law of the land. In its November 5, 1919, issue, the *New Ulm Review* published several articles that dealt with the subject of anti-German sentiments. Almost a year after the armistice, German-Americans were still viewed with suspicion. The *Review* reported on a renewed effort to restrict and suppress all things German as US war veterans returned home. The movement against the German language, music, art, literature, and German customs and traditions was still going strong. This time the American Legion supported this renewed war on anything German, as US war veterans might be offended by being reminded of the language, customs, and traditions of the former enemy.³⁰⁹ With the war officially over, the paper felt it was safe again to criticize this movement, calling it an absurd idea that would only hurt the US, as it would need a working knowledge of German language and customs to commence trade with Germany in the future.³¹⁰ A second article directly pointed out the influence of anti-German war sentiments on Prohibition. It charged that without the war and the accompanying anti-German hysteria and false patriotism, the Prohibition Amendment would have never passed. Instead, the passage of national Prohibition “owed much to the fact that Germans are supposed to like beer, and that such names as Anhauser-Busch and Schlitz and Pabst do not sound altogether British.”³¹¹ Here, the *Review* openly expressed that in its view anti-German

309 “Fighting German Music,” *New Ulm Review*, November 5, 1919, 6.

310 “Fighting German Music.”

311 “The Tyranny of Prohibition,” *New Ulm Review*, November 5, 1919, 6.

war sentiments had played a significant role in passing the Prohibition legislation. For New Ulm citizens it was quite obvious that without the war and the US fighting against Germany, national Prohibition legislation would not have been possible. It took almost a year after the armistice and nearly five months after Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles for the New Ulm papers to express their opinions more freely, yet anti-German sentiments still existed.

The St. Louis Papers and Prohibition

Similar to the New Ulm papers, neither the *Westliche Post* nor the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* pursued the argument that Prohibition was targeting German-Americans and the German-dominated beer brewing industry as a specific anti-German measure. Both papers published few articles that specifically attacked Prohibition as an anti-liberty measure. The English-language *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* rarely touched on the individual liberty aspects of Prohibition but concentrated more on the legislative as well as beer-specific issues of Prohibition. Both papers were far more concerned about the effects of Prohibition on the beer brewing industry and its economic consequences in St. Louis. This is understandable since the beer brewing industry was one of the main industries and largest employers in St. Louis. Overall, the *Westliche Post* used harsher language than did the *Post-Dispatch* in its direct attacks on the ASL and Prohibition supporters. This is somewhat surprising, given the general anti-German sentiments during the war. By focusing on possible consequences of Prohibition that were specific to the St. Louis beer brewing industry instead of emphasizing anti-German elements of the Prohibition campaign, German-Americans in St. Louis felt secure and justified in their criticism of Prohibition in general.

Beer Prohibition in St. Louis

The passing of the Food and Fuel Control Act in August 1917 authorized President Wilson to prohibit the use of foodstuff for the manufacture of alcoholic beverages. The January 1918 order to limit the alcoholic content of beer to 2.75 percent set the stage for St. Louis' papers to follow Prohibition developments carefully. The prominent presence of the beer brewing industry as a major employer in the city gave rise to concerns about the social and economic consequences of Prohibition. In September 1918, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* speculated that about one-quarter of the city's saloons would close on January 3, 1919, with the rest following within four months once the alcohol supplies were gone.³¹² The *Westliche Post* on July 13, 1918, reported about a meeting of the brewer and maltster union, the bartender protective benevolent league, and other labor organizations whose members' jobs were threatened by the impending cut of coal supplies to the brewing industry. Coal was diverted from non-essential industries to ensure that war-related industries received an adequate coal supply to produce war materials.

Five days later, the *Post* reported that two breweries planned to close in order to conserve coal supplies for other breweries in their organization, leaving 300 workers unemployed.³¹³ At their meeting, the unions estimated that about 10,000 workers could be unemployed within two months. While younger workers should not have any issues finding work, the unions were concerned that older workers would most likely be less fortunate. This was in part due to the relatively high wages of the brewing industry, where experienced workers made as much as \$26.50 per week.³¹⁴ While brewing industry workers might be able

312 "Fourth of City Saloons Will Close Jan. 3," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 7, 1918, 1.

313 "Zwei weitere Brauereien schließen," *Westliche Post*, July 18, 1918.

314 "Brauereiarbeiter planen Stellenvermittlungsbüro," *Westliche Post*, July 13, 1918, 7.

to find employment elsewhere, the article implied that other industries paid much lower wages. However, the article failed to note that due to the labor shortage during the war, higher wages were generally the norm. Between 1916 and the end of the war, weekly earnings of factory workers rose steadily. The average weekly earnings in manufacturing increased from \$12.77 in 1916 to \$19.33 in 1918.³¹⁵ While this was lower than what an experienced brewery worker could expect, a 1919 survey of twenty-eight industries in forty-three states revealed average weekly earnings of \$25.61 for male workers.³¹⁶ Given the general labor shortage during the war, brewery workers would have had minimal problems finding work in other industries that paid a similar wage. Throughout the war workers did possess a certain degree of bargaining power to demand higher wages. Nevertheless, for a city like St. Louis, whose brewing industry represented a substantial percentage of the local economy, the unions' concerns were not wholly unfounded. Thus, the unions warned of economic consequences that could impact the larger St. Louis economy. The article painted a grim picture of how other industries and services would be affected by Prohibition. It predicted that laid-off brewing employees would be unable to make their mortgage payments, provide basic necessities like food for their families, and would not spend extra money on leisure activities, thus bringing a downturn to the larger economy. The message was clear: Prohibition would actually add to social misery instead of eliminating it.

315 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *War and Postwar Wages, Prices, and Hours 1914-23 and 1939-44*, Bulletin No. 852 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945), 13.

316 Paul H. Douglas, "Wages and Hours of Labor in 1919," *Journal of Political Economy* 29, no. 1 (Jan., 1921), 78.

Call for Relief Measures

The unions actively set out to combat the impending unemployment situation by proposing the creation of a job placement agency. In September 1918, the idea of providing relief measures for unemployed brewery workers received new impetus when President Wilson issued a ban on the wartime production of beer. An editorial in the *Westliche Post* appealed to the St. Louis citizens in particular and to every American citizen and the US government in general to support the army of unemployed workers.³¹⁷ The writer pointed out that it was not just brewery workers affected but also the small businessman with his shop, arguing that every bit of unused manpower, every dollar not in circulation, and every empty building represented a loss to the nation's wealth. The article laid the blame for the situation with the government and demanded that it was the duty of the government and society to provide relief measures. In no uncertain terms, the editorial held the US government responsible for the impending increase of unemployment. This was particularly interesting in that the paper did not blame the breweries for not retooling their production but the government. The *Post* did not want to write negatively about an industry that Prohibitionists labeled as the scapegoat. Instead, the paper pointed to the source of the problem, Prohibition legislation. However, the excuse of prohibitive cost or lower profitability was just that – an excuse by the breweries. They were hoping to get exemptions from the government to continue brewing regular beer.

Both St. Louis papers argued that the government had an obligation to provide relief to the unemployed brewery workers and claimed that the government was punishing the brewery owners by not compensating them. Instead, the owners were left with expensive and

³¹⁷ "Knochentrocken," *Westliche Post*, September 23, 1918.

worthless pieces of machinery and large buildings.³¹⁸ However, many of the larger St. Louis breweries did remain open and retooled their operations. While some produced Near Beer and other non-alcoholic beverages, others ventured into a different line of production. Quite a few diversified by producing a variety of seemingly unrelated products like ice cream, dairy products, malt and yeast products, and even candy. It was not as difficult to retool, especially if the breweries switched to non-alcoholic beverages, and continued employment for their workers. Thus, retooling was a viable option. The degree of retooling operations depended on the size of the brewery. It was easier for larger breweries like Busch to retool and add other products to their production line, as they had the financial means to expand into non-alcohol related business ventures.

Opting to diversify its livelihood, in addition to producing “Near Beer,” August Busch, president of Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company in St. Louis, retooled a large part of his company’s buildings to become a slaughterhouse.³¹⁹ The *Westliche Post* praised Busch for this step, lauding him as a hero who secured employment for his workers when he could have easily closed the brewery and retired to enjoy a life of leisure. While it was certainly commendable that Busch kept his workers employed, the article failed to mention that Busch’s decision was not purely altruistic. After all, the slaughterhouse operation was profitable, or Busch would not have spent money in retooling his brewing business. By not mentioning the profitability of Busch’s new business venture, the article paints the beer-magnate as a benevolent businessman who was willing to spend his own money to retool, continue to provide employment, and provide the city, state, and nation with needed revenue. Of course, being able to do that also meant that Busch’s beer business was financially secure.

318 “Knochentrocken,” *Westliche Post*, September 23, 1918.

319 “August Buschs neues Unternehmen,” *Westliche Post*, January 7, 1919.

The author wanted the readers to see Busch as a patriotic American businessman who was different from not only other alcohol producers but also from the average American businessman whose only interest was accumulating more money at the expense of his workers. Despite his German heritage and his beer business, Busch, the article implied, was the quintessential American businessman and should be considered a model for others.

This editorial in particular was also a scolding accusation of the US government for failing to plan for the consequences of Prohibition. In essence, the US government left the brewery workers to fend for themselves once their livelihoods were destroyed. The article implied that the US government did not care about the wellbeing of the brewery workers or any other workers associated with the alcohol industry. The *Post-Dispatch* agreed, opining that it would be impossible to convert all of St. Louis' breweries to other uses without the government's help.³²⁰ Instead, it singled out one particular industry and ostracized a large part of its citizens. In a sense, the article covertly questioned why anybody associated with the alcohol industry should be patriotic and loyal to a country when the US government was clearly disloyal to them.

The Working Man And His Beer

The St. Louis papers also addressed the loss of revenue should national Prohibition become a reality. In an editorial, the *Westliche Post* called it absurd and ludicrous for the federal government to throw away approximately \$700,000,000 a year in revenue only to appease the ASL, at a time when the government was "feverishly" looking for new

³²⁰ "Fourth of City Saloons Will Close Jan. 3," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 7, 1918, 1.

revenue.³²¹ Likewise, a month later, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported that the city of St. Louis was proposing "... a city income tax and higher taxes on industries ... as the best way to make up the loss of about \$900,000 a year in revenue."³²² Considering that the city would also experience an increase in the unemployment rate, and unemployed workers unable to spend money on life's necessities, it would be difficult to imagine how a tax increase would make up for the lost revenue of the alcohol industry. Thus, the specter of unemployed workers marching in the streets and protesting the tax increase presented a real threat.

The possibility of labor unrest was repeatedly mentioned in both papers. The *Westliche Post* warned in September 1918 of the dangers that discontented workers demanding jobs represented. A peaceful demonstration of unemployed workers could quickly turn into a danger to the public peace and disrupt the lawful order.³²³ Workers were already unhappy and talked of strike action because of the Prohibition legislation. Although it is not explicitly mentioned, perhaps one of the most dangerous consequences of Prohibition was the specter of unemployed, organized workers demonstrating in the streets, causing social upheaval, and perhaps even attempting a Russian-style revolution. After all, Socialism was appealing to the working class.

An editorial in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* highlighted the danger of prohibiting beer to the working classes by stating that according to a Senate report, Prohibition would lower the output in shipyards by 25 percent because the workers were used to having their beer.³²⁴ Evidently, some Senators thought that beer was an indispensable necessity for workers and that without it they would either strike or lower their work performance, thus committing

321 "Prohibition und Steuerfrage," *Westliche Post*, August 14, 1918.

322 "City Income Tax Proposed To Make Up For Liquor Revenue," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 7, 1918, 1.

323 "Knochentrocken," *Westliche Post*, September 23, 1918.

324 "Unity Above All," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 23, 1918, 2.

sabotage. The issue of war sabotage was a concern, especially considering German-American workers who were under suspicion of divided loyalties. They were also generally accused of having an affinity for Socialism. Coupled with anti-German hysteria, the specter of a workers' revolution brought on in part by Prohibition seemed a real possibility for some legislators.

The Senate statement revealed three important aspects: First, it elucidated the concerns some Senators had regarding Prohibition and the working class in the war-industries and how much power these workers had. Second, it showed that workers in the war-industries were very much essential for the war effort and not easily replaceable, given the labor shortage. If these workers would organize and present a united front, they could (in theory) drastically impact the war effort through strikes, sabotage, and other work-interfering means. Third, it was remarkable how Prohibitionists failed to take the power of the working-class into account in staging strikes to cripple the economy. Prohibitionists believed they knew better than the workers did what was best for them. In general, this meant adopting the values and virtues of middle-class white Anglo-American society. Instead of giving workers a voice and agency, Prohibitionists showed their class privilege and decided for the workers how they should improve their lives. The *Post-Dispatch* astutely observed, "Men who are deprived of what they have been accustomed to use and are straitjacketed in conformity with a code of conduct formulated by others and arbitrarily imposed by political power, are not inclined to cheerful sacrifice, but to resentment and rebellion."³²⁵

A year later, the *Post-Dispatch* reported on the labor demonstrations in Washington, D.C., on Flag Day 1919. Again, the overarching theme was the threat of labor unrest due to

³²⁵ "Unity Above All," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 23, 1918, 2.

the impending wartime Prohibition of beer and wine on July 1, 1919. It seemed that labor by now was aware of its power and was using it to warn the public "... the tranquility of the working classes might be seriously menaced by enforcement of the war-time prohibition law."³²⁶ The paper devoted two full pages to the labor demonstration. This showed how important the labor issue was for St. Louis' working class, regardless of ethnicity. The St. Louis labor leaders also urged the repeal of wartime Prohibition, claiming that it was simply unjust "to make a criminal out of a man who drinks."³²⁷ Just as in the article from June 1918, the workers repeated their argument that beer and wine prohibition violated their personal liberty, and even more so, it took away an accustomed part of the workers' daily food. In contrast to the New Ulm papers, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* focused in greater detail on the possibility of greater labor unrest throughout the nation. For the New Ulm papers it was important to emphasize that the "No Beer – No Work!" campaign was about restricting personal freedom and right of choice and self-determination of the working class. The St. Louis papers approached the labor union demonstration from an economic viewpoint. While the papers supported lifting the ban on beer and light wines, and thus supporting the workers' anti-Prohibition demands, they did so more out of economic reasons than sympathizing with the labor movement in general. Beer prohibition in particular would greatly affect the economy of St. Louis, but a cross-industry strike by organized labor would have far greater consequences.

³²⁶ "Labor Protests In Capital Against July Prohibition," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 15, 1919, 1.

³²⁷ St. Louis Labor Leaders Urge July 1 Dry Act Repeal," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 15, 1919, 2.

Beer as a Food-Saving Measure

One interesting viewpoint that the New Ulm papers did not approach was the argument of exempting beer from Prohibition altogether since it was considered a food item and not alcohol. While the USBA in its Senate Hearing argued and provided medical studies that beer with 2.75 percent alcohol was not an intoxicating beverage, the St. Louis papers published several articles that listed beer as nourishment, similar to meat and potatoes. In an effort to refute the argument that beer breweries were wasting precious grain for alcohol production, some of the articles argued that beer drinkers consumed lower amounts of grains and cereals, as beer consumption lowered the need for carbohydrates. The discussion about beer's nutritional and medicinal value showed how far beer brewers were willing to go to further their goal of being exempt from Prohibition. The St. Louis papers picked up on the discussion and reinforced these claims to its readers. Especially German-Americans were familiar with some of the claims, as the nutritional and medicinal values of beer were part of their traditions. The *Westliche Post* proclaimed beer to be a restorative agent, a tonic and nutrient, and not just an alcoholic beverage.³²⁸ Bernard P. Bogy, candidate for the House of Representative from Missouri, also mentioned the restorative power of beer. He recollected a dramatic story about Pennsylvania steel mill workers who emerged from their work tired and beaten. After they drank their beer, one could clearly see the transformation, and they were able to return to work.³²⁹ To strengthen his argument to allow beer production, Bogy stated that beer was a food nutrient, and people who drank beer also ate less food, thus saving foodstuff for the war effort. While these stories were short tidbits, they did contain some truth. Beer is rich in carbohydrates and also contains some protein. Thus, the old German

³²⁸ "Leuchtet Prohibitionisten heim," *Westliche Post*, July 15, 1918.

³²⁹ "Gegen Prohibition," *Westliche Post*, July 16, 1918.

saying of “Seven beers replace a meal” holds true, and it is likely that especially German-Americans were aware of its wisdom.

Wilson’s Role And Congress’ Responsibility

Aside from dealing with Prohibition’s consequences as they relate to the St. Louis beer brewing industry, the papers also examined the legislative aspects of Prohibition. What stood out was that the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* concerned itself primarily with the legislative aspect of Prohibition and the role and responsibilities of the US government. In the articles examined, there was very little evidence of the paper attacking the ASL directly. This was surprising, given that the ASL was the major force seeking to enact national Prohibition, and thus the main adversary for anti-Prohibition supporters. However, once it became clear that national Prohibition was on its way, fighting against Prohibition became a legislative issue more so than fighting against the ASL. As an English-language paper in St. Louis, the *Post-Dispatch* reached a far greater and more diverse audience than the *Westliche Post* to educate its readers about the legislative process to fight Prohibition.

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* seemed to hold out hope and trust in President Wilson to take an active role in the Prohibition legislation. In a 1917 article headlined “President takes steps to avoid beer Prohibition,” the paper reported that Wilson was open to allow beer and light wines in order to save the Fuel and Food Control Act. According to the article, while Wilson agreed with the proposal of the bill to prohibit the use of foodstuffs for the manufacture of whiskey and gin, he thought allowing beer and light wines would be a reasonable compromise on Prohibition that would also satisfy the Prohibitionists.³³⁰ Wilson’s

³³⁰ “President Takes Steps To Avoid Beer Prohibition,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 29, 1917, 1.

suggestion of “Prohibition Light” was a clever move trying to pacify opponents of Prohibition. He came across as someone willing to find a compromise that both sides could live with. At the same time, he was also hoping to appeal to and appease the working-class and immigrant population. Having just entered the war, Wilson realized he needed the support of these groups, as they were crucial for the war effort. By proposing this compromise Wilson also appeared to be placating the beer brewing industry, owners as well as employees, which could be indicative of him trying to gain support particularly from the German-American community. The article appeared on the front page, suggesting that the paper thought this news to be of great importance.

However, despite Wilson’s proposition, the Fuel and Food Control Act did not contain the exemption for beer and wine. Instead, it contained the so-called Prohibition Rider that called for wartime Prohibition to go into effect on July 1, 1919. In a letter to the paper, Maurice J. Cassidy opined that people should not be upset at Wilson for signing the agricultural bill but instead should hold their representatives responsible. Mr. Cassidy attacked the Missouri representatives who did not express the will of their constituents when they voted for the bill and thus for wartime Prohibition. He suggested that labor organizations should write to their representatives and demand an introduction of a bill that would allow for the sale of beer and wine, as well as repeal the Prohibition Rider.³³¹ Mr. Cassidy did not state whether or not he was a member of the working class, however, one can assume that he was at least sympathetic to workers. He also recognized the importance beer played to laborers and how connected the working class was with the beer issue. Thus, the specter of discontented workers that would take to the streets to demand their right to enjoy

331 Maurice J. Cassidy, “Repeal the Prohibition Rider,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 4, 1918, 18.

beer was once again raised.

While Mr. Cassidy seemed to support President Wilson, one has to wonder if that changed when Wilson declared just a few days before wartime Prohibition would go into effect, that he had no power to lift the wartime Prohibition ban on beer and light wines before the end of demobilization.³³² While the US military had begun discharging soldiers from war-time service once the armistice took effect, demobilization would not be officially completed until the last American troops were sent back to the US in April 1920, returning the US military to a peacetime force.

President Wilson refused to take responsibility to rescind Prohibition of beer and light wine. Instead, he blamed Congress for not acting on his suggestion to repeal the Wartime Prohibition Act. The *Post-Dispatch* did not criticize the president's decision but elaborated on the fact that due to the legislative process Wilson's hands were in fact tied when it came to lifting the ban on beer and wine. Thus, it was up to Congress to act. Congress' inaction and tactic of delay were working. As the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported the next day, Representative Randall from California estimated that the army would not be demobilized before October 1919.³³³ At that point, the breweries would be out of beer due to wartime Prohibition and would not start brewing again since national Prohibition was on the horizon. The paper clearly pointed out that Congress had every intention to keep wartime Prohibition as long as necessary to carry into national Prohibition, thus creating a seamless transition. Considering that Congress was firmly in the hands of Prohibition supporters, it was unlikely there would be any mitigation of the current law until national Prohibition took effect. To the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, it seemed that Wilson had done all he could, and the culprit in the

332 "Wilson Says He Has No Power To Lift Ban Until End Of Demobilization," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 29, 1919, 1.

333 "Legislation On Prohibition To Go Over For Week," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 30, 1919, 2.

situation was Congress. If anything, the delaying tactics of Congress confirmed Mr. Cassidy's claim that Congress was responsible for wartime Prohibition and aimed to drag it out long enough for national Prohibition to go into effect. With that in mind, Mr. Cassidy's suggestion for workers to petition their representatives to overturn wartime Prohibition altogether seemed like a futile undertaking, especially with the "Drys" being in the majority now. While Congress was certainly complicit in the passing of Prohibition legislation, in Mr. Cassidy's opinion, the real culprit for Prohibition was the ASL. Congress was merely the tool for the ASL to push through its agenda – in the eyes of Prohibition opponents, Congress, the alleged voice of the people, had been hijacked by the ASL.

Fighting The ASL After The Fact

In contrast to this approach, the *Westliche Post* exclusively attacked the ASL in its articles. The primary Prohibitionist movement seemed to have been the clear point of attack for the German-language paper. One reason for this tactic was that by so doing, the *Westliche Post* was not attacking the US government directly but only the ASL. Second, the ASL and its Prohibition campaign were decisively anti-German. They questioned the loyalty of German-Americans and portrayed them as unpatriotic drunkards. The ASL attacked the German-dominated brewing industry and convinced the US Senate to investigate the USBA's role in alleged German wartime propaganda, as discussed in chapter one. Thus, it made sense that the German-language paper would have a greater interest in educating its readers about the role of the ASL. In the eyes of the *Post*, it was the ASL's work that forced national Prohibition on the American public.

While an editorial in the *Westliche Post* on July 10, 1918, expressed hope that Wilson

would intervene in the Prohibition debate, the president's role took a backseat. The German-language paper minced no words by bluntly stating that Prohibition "fanatics" were in control of Congress and ruled it with an absolutist tyrannical conviction.³³⁴ The *Post* used editorials as its preferred medium to convey the paper's disapproval and displeasure with Prohibition and the ASL. In an August 1918 editorial, the paper reminded its readers that the so-called wartime Prohibition was just the ASL and Congress' way to prepare the population for the Eighteenth Amendment.³³⁵ It called people delusional if they thought that wartime Prohibition would be repealed because it was simply a writ (*Verfügung*) valid only for the duration of the war. The paper sarcastically suggested that the ASL could probably offer its expert advice on how the government was going to make up for the lost revenue, thus opening another avenue where they could excel. While the editorial was sarcastic in its criticism and suggestions for the ASL to expand its sphere of influence, it also revealed the *Westliche Post's* contempt for the ASL. Perhaps the *Westliche Post* realized that humor was the best medicine to cope with Prohibition. The paper was also keenly aware that any legal fight to challenge Prohibition would be an uphill battle at this point. At the same time, the German-language paper did not mince words and tried to inform its readers of possible other legislative actions the ASL hoped to pursue.

Just a few days after Nebraska became the last necessary state to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment, the *Post* warned its readers that Prohibition was just the first step to restrict other freedoms. In dramatic fashion, the paper foresaw the ASL pushing for further actions that would eventually result in the complete loss of other freedoms and enslave the individual

334 "Prohibitionsfanatiker," *Westliche Post*, July 10, 1918.

335 "Prohibition," *Westliche Post*, August 28, 1918.

will.³³⁶ It argued that while around the world, people rose against dictatorial regimes and demanded freedom and liberty, in the US, the birthplace of democracy, a small minority of fanatics put the majority into bondage and worked to dismantle the pillars of the American nation. The editorial used strong language and encouraged action against Prohibition. However, the paper did not provide any instructions as to how people should go about fighting Prohibition. This, of course, was a clever move, as the government could not accuse the *Post* of directly inciting the public. The paper merely pointed out that while the war was fought to “make the world safe for democracy,” the US was taking a step towards a less democratic system.

Conclusion

Analyzing articles in the German-language *New Ulm Post* and *Westliche Post* and the English-language *New Ulm Review* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* offered a glimpse of the opinions and attitudes about World War I, anti-German sentiments, and Prohibition. These articles represented a particular snapshot of what the papers thought they could publish without being labeled disloyal, unpatriotic, and treasonous. This held especially true for the New Ulm papers, which found themselves in a precarious situation after the MCPS put the town under surveillance because of its German heritage. The MCPS attacked German-Americans on two issues where they suspected opposition: loyalty and Prohibition, and the New Ulm papers covered both issues.

Although the New Ulm papers advised their readers to be cautious and keep the display of Germanness out of the public eye in the immediate months after the US entered

³³⁶ “Der Sieg der Prohibition kein Sieg des Volkes,” *Westliche Post*, January 18, 1919.

the war, the editorials continued to criticize the repressive policies of the MCPS. This was especially evident after the July 1917 rally, after which calls for caution were absent. If anything, one would have expected to see the papers take on a more restrained position to not attract further attention, given the MCPS' charges and surveillance. However, the papers defied the MCPS as much as possible and followed their Turner tradition. Undoubtedly, the moral beliefs of the papers' editor, Albert Steinhauser, played a significant role in how both papers approached the issues of loyalty, patriotism, and Prohibition.

While there was a marked absence of letters to the editors and opinion pieces by the citizens of New Ulm, the papers published editorials and articles written under pseudonyms critical of the war and anti-German sentiments. Both papers criticized the MCPS and defended freedom of speech, personal liberty, and restated their opposition to Prohibition. This lack of letters by the general readership can be seen as a reaction to the intimidation attempts by the MCPS. After all, the town was already under general suspicion of being pro-German. People did not want to give the Commission any more reasons to infringe upon their personal rights. Both papers continued to voice their opposition to Prohibition after the war ended.

The New Ulm papers emphasized that Prohibition was un-American because it restricted and even eliminated the American ideal of personal freedom. Considering the history of New Ulm and its Turner heritage, it is not surprising that the New Ulm papers attacked Prohibition as a measure that restricted individual liberty. Additionally, since the town was under surveillance by the MCPS, the focus on treating Prohibition as an issue of preserving and defending personal freedom also highlighted the papers' approach to the MCPS' policies of restricting freedom by monitoring the activities of German-Americans.

While the Turners were staunch defenders of the American ideals of freedom and liberty, they were also fighting to “protect the political rights and the German heritage” of German-Americans.³³⁷ In that sense, the New Ulm Germans were defending not only their Turner principles but also the very founding principles of America.

In contrast, the St. Louis papers were more concerned with how Prohibition affected the local beer brewing industry. This is understandable as the brewers were one of the main employers of the city. Although German-Americans in St. Louis represented a large part of the city’s population, they were just one of many different ethnicities. Unlike New Ulm, St. Louis was not founded as a German refuge where Germans could live, practice, and maintain their Turner principles and publicly display their Germanness. St. Louis Germans had far more varied backgrounds. This is not to say that the German community felt less German, but they experienced living and working with people of other ethnic backgrounds. While they kept some German traditions, they were not maintained in everyday life, but rather the Germanness of St. Louis Germans was celebrated at special events and holidays. New Ulm Germans chose to separate themselves and live in their own community. Living in a close-knit community with not only a shared ethnic background but also shared principles made it easier to maintain their Germanness.

While both New Ulm papers reminded their readers to keep their thoughts to themselves and not attract unnecessary attention regarding unpatriotic behavior, they did not hide their anti-Prohibition stance. The English *New Ulm Review* was much more forceful in its opposition to Prohibition than was the German *New Ulm Post*. Opposing Prohibition in English probably seemed safer than doing so in German since English-language publications

³³⁷ American Turners Records, 1853-2004, Ruth Lilly Special Collections and Archives, University Library, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis, January 17, 2017, <http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/collections/german-american/mss030>.

were not automatically under suspicion of publishing disloyal and subversive contents. This was of particular significance as the role of the MCPS included not just monitoring the foreign press and immigrants but also regulating the liquor traffic. English-language papers were also accessible to a far greater audience. The *Post* was more scrutinized since it published in German, the language of the war enemy.

Once the war ended, the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis directly attacked the ASL in a series of editorials. As the war came to an end, the *Westliche Post* felt it was safe to publish its opposition and antipathy not only to Prohibition legislation but even more so to the source of Prohibition. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* seemed to play it safe and relied more on factual, not opinion pieces, and less aggressive reporting about Prohibition and the consequences for St. Louis. The St. Louis papers also did not seem to think that Prohibition was an anti-German measure. For them, it was an attack on the beer brewing industry and its workers, who were not exclusively German but a polyglot mix of different ethnicities. Similarly, New Ulm German-Americans felt it was unnecessary to provoke the flames of anti-German sentiments further and risk even greater scrutiny by the MCPS by appearing too agitated over Prohibition. Thus, the New Ulm papers did not talk about Prohibition as an attack on German customs, nor did they portray it as a strictly anti-German measure.

Since New Ulm Germans were culturally less assimilated than the St. Louis Germans, they represented an easier target for anti-German sentiments. New Ulm Germans relied on their Turner principles to voice their opposition to Prohibition. The New Ulm and St. Louis papers tried to justify their opposition to Prohibition by providing arguments that appealed to a broader readership, not only German-Americans. This was especially evident in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, which had a far more diverse readership than the New Ulm papers. The

New Ulm papers waited until November 1919, a full year after the armistice and just two months before Prohibition would go in effect before they published articles arguing that anti-German war sentiments had impacted the legislation. They realized that by then it was safe enough for them to voice their opinions freely. The war was over, the MCPS had lost its authority, and Prohibition was well on its way. This did not mean that they had different opinions about Prohibition and anti-German sentiments during the war. The articles showed that New Ulm Germans opposed Prohibition strongly. However, given the overall scrutiny German-Americans faced during the war, it is not surprising that the newspapers did not make that connection more forcefully.

Conclusion

One year after the war to end all wars came to an end, and two months before national Prohibition went into effect, the *New Ulm Review* published an editorial that summed up what this thesis set out to demonstrate – the role anti-German World War I propaganda played in the Prohibition campaign. The article concluded,

Without the war, national prohibition would never have been voted even by the politicians. It has swept through the legislatures on a false wave of agitation masquerading as patriotism. It owed much to the fact that Germans are supposed to like beer, and that such names as Anhauser-Busch and Schlitz and Pabst do not sound altogether British. . . . Our beer was taken from us, finally, because most of the brewers were Germans.³³⁸

This astute observation from a newspaper that was under surveillance for disloyal and seditious behavior throughout the war showed that German-Americans were well aware of the connection between anti-German sentiments and Prohibition.

While scholars in the US and Germany have begun to take a renewed look at the German-American experience in recent years, their focus has been on the loss of the public German-American identity during World War I. The influence of anti-German sentiments during World War I on Prohibition and the impact on German-American communities has been a footnote at best. This is rather startling, as both events greatly affected German-American communities. My research connected these two seminal events and their impact on German-American social and cultural traditions, adding a critical aspect to the existing literature. This thesis demonstrated that anti-German World War I propaganda influenced the Prohibition campaign. National Prohibition did not develop in isolation; rather, it must be examined in conjunction with World War I and its anti-German sentiments. This thesis showed that anti-German war rhetoric played an instrumental role in the Prohibition

338 “The Tyranny of Prohibition,” *New Ulm Review*, November 5, 1919, 6.

campaign by targeting German-American cultural traditions. My study shed light on the New Ulm Germans and the St. Louis Germans' reactions to anti-German sentiments and Prohibition.

This thesis set out to examine two questions: What role did anti-German attitudes play during the Great War in relation to the Prohibition debate; and second, how did the anti-German atmosphere impact German-Americans' reactions to Prohibition? In the preceding pages I argued that the Prohibition campaign had a strong element of anti-German sentiments. It exploited and expanded prevailing anti-German attitudes of World War I by targeting not only the German-American dominated brewing industry but also German-Americans. Bolstered by the war's anti-German sentiments, Prohibitionists specifically targeted German-Americans with the aim to eliminate their social and cultural traditions. To that end, the Prohibition campaign appealed to a variety of progressive reformers, notably those involved in the Americanization movement. Even though German-Americans were considered one of the more desirable immigrant groups, their cultural traditions, mainly their Sunday leisure activities at the beer garden, stood in contrast to Anglo-American values. How German-Americans reacted to anti-German war propaganda and a general anti-German atmosphere, Prohibition, and attacks on their cultural traditions depended largely on the specific German-American community's demographics. I argued that it greatly mattered how homogenous or diverse their specific communities were. My research showed that the specific background of a German-American community, even more so the reason and purpose of the establishment of a German-American community, also influenced how these communities developed and faced anti-German sentiments and Prohibition.

To answer these questions I had to cast a wide net of historical research by looking at

the evolution of the various temperance movements into the Prohibition movement, World War I propaganda and Prohibition material, German immigration, and the development of a shared German-American ethnic identity. This approach allowed for a broad picture to connect the different historiographies in order to provide a detailed analysis of my thesis. The findings of these “sub-categories” were crucial to answer my research questions. They also provided a more nuanced picture of the relationship between anti-German war rhetoric and Prohibition.

My analysis showed that the influx of German immigrants during the mid-nineteenth century and the increasing public display of their Germanness in the forms of beer gardens brought them to the attention of Prohibitionists and Americanizers alike. Although German-American communities were fragmented and lacked unity and a shared heritage, the beer gardens were instrumental in forging a common bond. Social conviviality, *Gemütlichkeit*, and the communal drinking of alcohol played an important role in creating a shared German identity despite religious and regional differences. The German-American idea of Sunday as a day of public recreation clashed with the predominant Anglo-American view of appropriate Sunday activities. The insistence of German-Americans to maintain and preserve their customs validated and exacerbated the prevailing attitude that they were alien to Anglo-American culture. These cultural differences only worsened with the outbreak of World War I when the Committee on Public Information (CPI) embarked on a massive propaganda campaign that would have far-reaching consequences for German-Americans.

My detailed analysis of a variety of CPI material showed that it permeated all levels of American society. Anti-German sentiments were ubiquitous and helped to reinforce the idea that the German enemy was already present in the US in the form of German-

Americans. German-Americans were put under general suspicion and accused of being disloyal, unpatriotic, sabotaging the war effort, and supporting Germany. The US government investigated the United States Brewers' Association, revoked the charter of the National German-American Alliance, and accused all German-Americans of being disloyal for simply maintaining their cultural traditions. These characterizations perpetuated the image of the unpatriotic German-American who was working against the US. My analysis of the Anti-Saloon League's material confirmed that the war's anti-German rhetoric was carried over into the Prohibition campaign. The Prohibition posters clearly identified German-Americans and used these stereotypes to ensure that people made the connection between the German war enemy and German-Americans. By comparing war material from the CPI with Prohibition material, I was able to show an explicit connection between the two campaigns.

To gauge the reaction of German-Americans to Prohibition I focused on two different German-American communities, New Ulm, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri, and their respective English and German newspapers. Through my research, I found that the reaction of German-Americans to anti-German propaganda and Prohibition depended largely on their specific community's ethnic and ideological make-up. For that reason, I focused more closely on New Ulm as that community represented a unique opportunity. Founded by freethinking Turners in search of establishing a community built on their principles it differed drastically from St. Louis. New Ulm at the outbreak of the Great War represented an island of Turner Germanness that attracted the attention of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS). The relationship between the town and the MCPS was crucial to understand New Ulm's reaction to Prohibition. Even more so, the town's Turner heritage shaped the papers' reaction to Prohibition. Although the New Ulm papers advised their

readers to be cautious and keep displays of Germanness out of the public in the immediate months after the US entered the war, the papers kept up their criticism of the MCPS, the war, and Prohibition despite the MCPS' surveillance. Their Turner principles of liberty and personal and political freedom were hugely influential in guiding their approach.

While this case study allows for an expansion of the current literature, a true expansion and examination of the historiography require additional studies on German-American communities and their reaction to anti-German war rhetoric and Prohibition. Additionally, further research into the operation of other state defense councils during World War I, especially in states with a high German-American population, is needed to gain a more precise picture of the German-American experience. While this thesis examined the role beer gardens and social conviviality played in creating a shared German identity, it is essential to explore how this idea of German-American cultural traditions developed into what Americans today perceive to be German heritage.

The New Ulm papers considered Prohibition as the antithesis to the American ideal of liberty, which was also a Turner ideal. Thus, it was only logical for the Turners to defend their heritage. The Germans in St. Louis lacked this Turner heritage, and their reaction to Prohibition differed from New Ulm. Unlike the Germans from New Ulm, the St. Louis Germans came from diverse backgrounds and lived in a city with an ethnically diverse population. St. Louis Germans approached Prohibition by focusing on the economic consequences of the legislation. This was understandable since beer breweries were one of the main industries in the city. To St. Louis Germans, Prohibition had a direct impact on their economic wellbeing, while to New Ulm Germans the Prohibition debate centered more on their ideological principles of liberty and freedom, which included preserving and celebrating

their Germanness in public. With the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment the New Ulm Germans not only lost that freedom but also lost an important marker of their ethnic and ideological identity.

Bibliography

- American Turners Records, 1853-2004. Ruth Lilly Special Collections and Archives. University Library, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. January 17, 2017. Accessed December 5, 2018. <http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/collections/german-american/mss030>.
- Anderegg, Jeanne. "Pfaender, Wilhelm (1826-1905)." MNOPEdia. *Minnesota Historical Society*. Dec. 5, 2017. Accessed March 10, 2019. <http://www.mnopedia.org/person/pfaender-wilhelm-1826-1905>.
- Axelrod, Alan. *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Baker, Jason Todd. "Pulitzer, Preetorius, and the German American Identity Project of the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis." In *German Diasporic Experiences: Identity, Migration, and Loss*, edited by Mathias Schulze, James M. Skidmore, David G. John, Grit Liebscher, and Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach, 95-106. Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008.
- Barker, John Marshal. *The Saloon Problem And Social Reform*. Boston: The Everett Press, 1905.
- Bell, Ernest Albert. *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls: Or War on the White Slave Trade*. Chicago: G.S. Ball, 1910.
- Benbow, Mark. "German Immigrants in the United States Brewing Industry." In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*. Vol. 2, edited by William J. Hausman. German Historical Institute. Last modified February 01, 2017. Accessed March 10, 2019. <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=284>.
- Bergquist, James M. "German Communities in American Cities: An Interpretation of the Nineteenth-Century Experience." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1984): 9-30.
- Blocker, Jack S., Jr. *American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989.
- Brewer, Susan A. *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Buffington, Joseph. *Friendly Words to the Foreign Born*. Committee on Public Information, 1917.

- Bungert, Heike. "The Singing Festivals of German Americans, 1849-1914." *American Music* 34, no. 2, Music in Four Distinct American Communities (Summer 2016): 141-179.
- Burnham, J. C. "New Perspectives on the Prohibition "Experiment" of the 1920s." *Journal of Social History* 2, no. 1 (Autumn 1968): 51-68.
- Burns, Eric. *The Spirits of America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004.
- Caulkins, Robert M. "The Non Partisan League: Minnesota, North Dakota, Civil Liberties and the Struggle for Survival During World War I." Master's thesis, University of North Dakota, 2010.
- Cherrington, Ernest H. "Twenty Eventful Years." Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Company, 1930.
- Chrislock, Carl H. *Watchdog of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991.
- Committee on Public Information. *Activities of the Committee on Public Information*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918.
- . *Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in their own Words*. Washington, D.C., 1918.
- . *German Plots and Intrigues*. Washington, D.C., 1918.
- . *German War Practices*. Washington, D.C., 1918.
- . *German Treatment of Conquered Territory*. Washington, D.C., 1918.
- Conzen, Kathleen Neils. "German-Americans and the Invention of Ethnicity." In *America and the Germans*. Vol. 1, *An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History – Immigration, Language, Ethnicity*, edited by Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh, 131-147. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.
- . *Germans in Minnesota*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2003.
- Cooper, John Milton, Jr. *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-1920*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1990.
- Creel, George. *How We Advertised America*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1920.
- Detjen, David W. *The Germans in Missouri, 1900-1918: Prohibition, Neutrality, and Assimilation*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985.

- Diner, Steven J. *A Very Different Age – Americans of the Progressive Era*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1998. Kindle edition.
- Dobbert, G. A. “German-Americans between the New and Old Fatherland, 1870-1914.” *American Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (Winter 1967): 663-680.
- Douglas, Paul H. “Wages and Hours of Labor in 1919.” *Journal of Political Economy* 29, no. 1 (January 1921): 78-80.
- Finkelman, Paul. “The War on German Language and Culture, 1917-1925.” In *Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the Era of World War I, 1900-1924*, edited by Hans-Jürgen Schröder, 177-205. Providence: Berg Publishers, 1993.
- Fischer, Nick. “The Committee on Public Information and the Birth of US State Propaganda.” *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2016): 51-78.
- Fox, Hugh F. “The Prosperity of the Brewing Industry.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 34, no. 3, American Business Conditions (November 1909): 47-57.
- Garon, Sheldon. *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Gimmestad, Dennis. “Platting New Ulm,” *Minnesota History* 56, no. 6 (Summer 1999): 345-350.
- Gompers, Samuel. “Prohibition and the Immigrant Worker” (1919). In *The Politics of Moral Behavior*, edited by K. Austin Kerr, 124-126. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1973.
- Hasian, Marouf A., Jr. “Freedom of Expression and Propaganda During World War I: Understanding George Creel and America's Committee on Public Information.” *Free Speech Yearbook* 36, no. 1 (1998): 48-60.
- Hausman, William J. “Introduction, Volume 2: The Emergence of an Industrial Nation.” In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*. Vol. 2, edited by William J. Hausman. German Historical Institute. Last modified April 13, 2018. Accessed March 10, 2019. <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=276>.
- Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. 2nd ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988.

- Hofmann, Annette R. "The American Turners: their past and present." *Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte* 37, no. 2 (2015): 119-127. Accessed January 16, 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rbce.2014.11.020>.
- Hoisington, Daniel John. *A German Town: A History of New Ulm, Minnesota*. Roseville, MN: Edinborough Press, 2004.
- Holbrook, Franklin F., and Livia Appel. *Minnesota in the War with Germany*. Vol. 1. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1928.
- James, Pearl, ed. *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.
- Kazecki, Jakub, and Jason Lieblang. "Regression versus Progression: Fundamental Differences in German and American Posters of the First World War." In *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture*, edited by Pearl James, 111-141. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.
- Kahn, Otto. "Americans of German Origin and the War." In *American Loyalty*. Committee on Public Information: Washington, D.C., 1917.
- Kamphoefner, Walter. "The German Component to American Industrialization." In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*. Vol. 2, edited by William J. Hausman. German Historical Institute. Last modified July 30, 2015. Accessed July 2, 2019. <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=189>.
- Kazal, Russell A. *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Kennedy, David M. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Kerr, K. Austin. *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985.
- Kingsbury, Celia Malone. *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.
- Kingsdale, Jon M. "The 'Poor Man's Club': Social Functions of the Urban Working-Class Saloon." *American Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Oct. 1973): 472-489.
- Lee, Alfred McClung. "Techniques of Social Reform: An Analysis of the New Prohibition Drive." *American Sociological Review* 9, no. 1 (Feb. 1944): 65-77.

- Lee, John R. "The So-Called Profit Sharing System in the Ford Plant." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 65, Personnel and Employment Problems in Industrial Management (May 1916): 297-310.
- Lekan, Thomas. "German Landscape: Local Promotion of the Heimat Abroad." In *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*, edited by Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin, 141-166. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Lewis, Michael. "Access to Saloons, Wet Voter Turnout, and Statewide Prohibition Referenda, 1907-1919." *Social Science History* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 373-404.
- Lissak, Rivka Shpak. *Pluralism & Progressives – Hull House and the New Immigrants, 1890-1919*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Luebke, Frederick C. *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974.
- McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920*. New York: Free Press, 2003.
- McGirr, Lisa. *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*. New York: W. W. Norton Company, 2015.
- Messinger, Gary S. *The Battle for the Mind: War and Peace in the Era of Mass Communication*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.
- Meyer, Sabine. *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2015.
- Miller, Carl. "The Rise of the Beer Barons," BeerHistory.com, 1999. Accessed June 30, 2019. <http://www.beerhistory.com/library/holdings/beerbarons.shtml>.
- Mittelman, Amy. *Brewing Battles: A History of American Beer*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2008.
- Mock, James R., and Cedric Larson. *Words that won the War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939.
- Moltmann, Günter. "The Pattern of German Emigration to the United States in the Nineteenth Century." In *America and the Germans*. Vol. 1, *An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History – Immigration, Language, Ethnicity*, edited by Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh, 14-24. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

- Oakley, Imogen B. "The Prohibition Law and the Political Machine." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 109, Prohibition and Its Enforcement (September 1923): 165-174.
- Panunzio, Constantine. "The Foreign Born and Prohibition." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 163, Prohibition: A National Experiment (September 1932): 147-154.
- Pegram, Thomas R. *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998.
- "Peopling St. Louis: the Immigration Experience." A Preservation Plan for St. Louis, Part I: Historic Contexts. City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2011-2019. Accessed February 12, 2019.
<https://www.stlouismo.gov/government/departments/planning/cultural-resources/preservation-plan/Part-I-Peopling-St-Louis.cfm>.
- Ripley, LaVern J. "Ameliorated Americanization: The Effect of World War I on German-Americans in the 1920s." In *America and the Germans*. Vol. 2, *An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History – The Relationship in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Frank Trommler and Joseph McVeigh, 217-231. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.
- . *The German-Americans*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976.
- Ritter, Luke. "Sunday Regulation and the Formation of German American Identity in St. Louis, 1840-1860," *Missouri Historical Review* 17, no. 1 (2012): 23-40.
- Rohrer, James R. "The Origins of the Temperance Movement: A Reinterpretation." *Journal of American Studies* 24, no. 2 (August 1990): 228-235.
- Ronnenberg, Herman W. *The Politics of Assimilation: The Effect of Prohibition on the German-Americans*. New York: Carlton Press, 1975.
- Rothbart, Ron. "The Ethnic Saloon as a Form of Immigrant Enterprise." *The International Migration Review* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 332-358.
- Russau, Hans. "Plain Words by a Plain Citizen." In *American Loyalty*. Committee on Public Information: Washington, D.C., 1917.
- Sinclair, Andrew. *Prohibition – The Era of Excess*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962.
- Skarstein, Karl Jakob. *The War with the Sioux: Norwegians against Indians, 1862-1863*. Translated by Melissa Gjellstad and Danielle Skjelver. Grand Forks: The Digital Press @ The University of North Dakota, 2015.

- Stiehl, Simone. "Mobilisierung des amerikanischen Volks zum Eintritt in den Ersten Weltkrieg mithilfe von Bildpropaganda." *Scriptum* 4, no. 2 (2014): 81-95.
- Taylor, Philip M. *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- The 1917 Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association*. New York City: N.p., 1918.
- The 1918 Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association*. New York City: N.p., 1919.
- The 1919 Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association*. New York City: N.p., 1920.
- The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing With Prohibition*. Cincinnati, OH: National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association of America, 1917.
- The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing With Prohibition*. Cincinnati, OH: The Publicity Department of the National Association of Distillers and Wholesale Dealers, 1918.
- The Year Book of the United States Brewers' Association for 1920-21*. New York City: N.p., 1922.
- Thomas, William H., Jr. *Unsafe for Democracy*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.
- Thompson, H. Paul, Jr. "Temperance and Prohibition." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*. Oxford University Press, May 2017. Accessed November 20, 2018. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.013.82.
- Timberlake, James H. *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963.
- Tyler, Alice Felt. "William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm." *Minnesota History* 30, no. 1 (March 1949): 24-35.
- US Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States 1789 – 1945*. Washington D.C., 1949.
- . *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Washington D.C., 1975.

- . *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970, Part 1*. Bicentennial Edition. Washington D.C., 1977.
- . *Thirteenth Census of the United States – Population 1910*, Vol I. “Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock.” Washington, D.C., 1913.
- US Congress. Senate. Report of the Subcommittee on the Judiciary United States Senate. *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda: Relating to charges against the United States Brewers’ Association and Allied Interests (Pursuant to S. Res. 307 and 436)*. 65th Cong., 1st sess., 1919.
- US Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *War and Postwar Wages, Prices, and Hours 1914-23 and 1939-44*, Bulletin No. 852. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945.
- Ward, Charles Shandrew. “The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety in World War I: Its Formation and Activities.” Master’s thesis, University of Minnesota, 1965.
- Welskopp, Thomas. *Amerikas große Ernüchterung: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Prohibition*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010.
- . “Bottom of the Barrel.” *Behemoth* 6, no. 1 (2013): 27-54.
- . “Prohibition (1919-1933).” In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*. Vol. 4, edited by Jeffrey Fear. German Historical Institute. Last modified March 17, 2015. Accessed November 20, 2018. <https://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=87>.
- . “Prohibition in the United States: The German-American Experience, 1919-1933.” In *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*. Vol. 4, edited by Jeffrey Fear. German Historical Institute. Last modified March 17, 2015. Accessed January 24, 2019. http://www.ghidc.org/fileadmin/user_upload/GHI_Washington/Publications/Bulletin53/bu53_031.pdf.
- Wilson, Woodrow. “Address of the President of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the two Houses of Congress.” April 2, 1917. In *How the War Came to America*. Washington, D.C.: The Committee on Public Information, 1917.
- . “Executive Order 2594 - Creating Committee on Public Information.” April 13, 1917. The American Presidency Project. Accessed April 14, 2018. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-2594-creating-committee-public-information>.
- . “Message on Neutrality.” August 19, 1914. The American Presidency Project. Accessed April 14, 2018. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/message-neutrality>.

Wright, Christopher James. "The impact of anti-German hysteria in New Ulm, Minnesota and Kitchener, Ontario: a comparative study." Master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2011.

Wüstenbecker, Katja. *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg: US-Politik und nationale Identitäten im Mittleren Westen*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007.

Magazines/Newspapers

The Literary Digest. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company. LIV, no. 15 (April 14, 1917); XLIX, no. 20 (November 14, 1914); LVIII, no. 4 (July 27, 1918).

The Milwaukee Journal. Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

New Ulm Post. New Ulm, Minnesota.

New Ulm Review. New Ulm, Minnesota.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch. St. Louis, Missouri.

Westliche Post. St. Louis, Missouri.

Websites

Anti-Saloon League Museum Cartoons and Fliers. Westerville Public Library Anti-Saloon League Museum.
<http://search.westervillelibrary.org/iii/cpro/CollectionViewPage.external?lang=eng&sp=1000138&suite=def>.

Bernhardt Wall. CardCow.com. 2004-2019.
[https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow\[\]=Dogs](https://www.cardcow.com/search3.php?s=Bernhardt+Wall&sort=d&catnarrow[]=Dogs).

Digital Collections - Barron Collier Series of Patriotic Cartoons. Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/photos/?fa=partof:prints+and+photographs+division%7Cpartof:posters:+world+war+i+posters&q=barron+collier>.

Library of Congress. *Digital Collections – Posters: World War I Posters*.
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/about-this-collection/>.

Ohio Prohibition Campaign Advertisements. The Ohio State University.
<https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/ohiodry/brdsds>.