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Rick Sedlisky, Editor

*In Defense:*

*One German-Language Newspaper's Promotion of  
German-American Culture and Ideals During World War I*

*By Austin Wisser<sup>1</sup>*

Editor's Note: Austin Wisser is the author of *In Defense: One German-Language Newspaper's Promotion of German-American Culture and Ideals During World War I*.

His paper is a part of studies that will afford Mr. Wisser his Master's Degree in Applied History. One of the goals in this course of study, and while not mandatory, was for students to attempt to have their works published.

We are pleased to publish Mr. Wisser's work. His paper is one that documents one more part of Scranton's history, as well as the histories of our commonwealth and nation.

Austin Wisser is from Harleysville, PA. He is a 2013 graduate of Souderton Area schools. He received his undergraduate degree in History and Secondary Education in 2017 at Shippensburg University. That year, he returned to Shippensburg to work towards his Masters in Applied History. Upon completion, his goal is to teach social studies to students from grades seven to twelve.

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Discrimination is not a new concept in the United States or around the world. When mentioning discrimination in the United States, African and Native Americans usually come to mind. After all, African Americans faced slavery and post-slavery racism such as Jim Crow for centuries. The United States government forced Native Americans onto reservations and these groups saw attempts by the United States government and citizens to assimilate native tribes into American culture. Most likely few Americans think about ethnic discrimination when it comes to one of America's largest and oldest European ethnic groups; the Germans. However, German Americans faced small acts of discrimination and pressures of assimilation since their arrival in the United States as early as the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The height of discrimination against German Americans came with the advent of World War I when many of the American people and eventually the American government turned against all things, German. For this, German American communities faced a country that thought them the enemy.

To better understand the prejudices that Germans faced in America, it is best to examine this in one of the largest German ethnic states; Pennsylvania. The focus will be specifically looking at how the Pennsylvania German community in Scranton portrayed their culture and beliefs during the war years of 1914 to 1918. The focus is on what the community thought was important to them by considering the German language newspaper of the city, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* (Scranton Weekly). This newspaper printed some articles in English during the war in attempts to promote their values, culture, and ideas to their English-speaking neighbors. This research will answer what the *Scranton Wochenblatt* portrayed in English and what the paper was promoting and arguing as well as how the tone of the English articles changed once the United States formally entered the First World War. Finally, this research will examine some of the items in the newspaper that did not appear to change between the time that the war began and ended. The English articles of the *Scranton Wochenblatt* initially argued and promoted German culture as beneficial to American society but once the United States declared war, some of the articles did an about-face in terms of supporting German interests. However, many articles still supported the Pennsylvania German view of the war, some with tact while others were more blatant. Even with some change, many commodities of the newspaper did not change from before the United States' entrance into the war. The German community portrayed themselves as Americans while showing their concern for the United States and at the same time demonstrating their distaste for some American policies during the war.

This paper provides a new view of how Pennsylvania Germans felt about the war and their community. Previous articles focused primarily on how the actions of American citizens and the United States government influenced or affected the German American communities during the war. Other sources focused on how World War One specifically changed German American communities. There were several sources that supported the theme in which the American government and citizens changed the German American communities. Tina Brakebill noted in her article that the non-German American community used fear to coerce the German community in McLean County, Illinois, to assimilate into the dominant American culture.<sup>3</sup> Mark

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<sup>2</sup> Agnes Bretting, "The Old Home and the New: The Problem of Americanization," *Germans to America: 300 Years of Immigration, 1683 to 1983*, ed. Günter Motlmann, trans. Colin C. Boone (Stuttgart: Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 1982), 153-154.

<sup>3</sup> Tina Stewart Brakebill, "From 'German Days' to '100 Percent Americanism:' McLean County, Illinois 1913-1918: German Americans, World War One, and One Community's Reaction," *Journal Of The Illinois State*

Kuss wrote about how the actions of the Federal government infringed on the basic rights of all Americans during the First World War by examining the German American community of New Orleans. The community lost basic freedoms, such as freedom of speech and expression, due to the government's actions.<sup>4</sup> The final piece related to the first theme is from Patricia Michaelis who focused on the threats and anti-German hysteria in Kansas that the American government espoused. German Americans became targets of the un-American hysteria of other Kansas citizens when, in fact, the German Americans were very loyal to America.<sup>5</sup>

The second theme for the historiography is how the war specifically altered and or affected the German American communities. One of the first authors to focus on this theme was Alexander Waldenrath, who looked at the German-language newspapers of Pennsylvania and how they originally promoted the German position during the war. Once the United States entered the war, the papers altered their view so the newspapers could survive.<sup>6</sup> Waldenrath's work provided the basis for the information on the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. The next author, Willi Paul Adams, looked at four United States House Representatives who were born in Germany but served in Congress during the war. Adams' work examined the varying degree of policies of these politicians and how the policies reflected the extent of the assimilation of their German American constituencies. He found that the policies and communities varied greatly during the war.<sup>7</sup> Stephen Gross looked at two German American communities in Minnesota and how their rural attributes and close community ties helped their German culture withstand the onslaught of anti-German sentiments and assimilation policies of local merchant elites.<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Paul Hegi focused on how unpatriotic German communities were during the war, in Cook County, Texas. He found that the German American communities, despite all the tensions placed on them by their neighbors, were very patriotic and supported the United States' war effort. The only change in these communities was that their patriotism became more pronounced during the war.<sup>9</sup>

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*Historical Society* (1998-) 95, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 167-168, accessed February 3, 2018, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/40193520?&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40193520?&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>4</sup> Mark Kuss, "Hey Man! Watch Your Language: Treatment of Germans and German Americans in New Orleans during World War I," *Louisiana History* 56, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 197, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=f82e5f4c-1e4c-48e0-a462-55423bc2e299%40sessionmgr120>.

<sup>5</sup> Patricia Michaelis, "Crisis of Loyalty: Examples of Anti-German Sentiment from Kansas Memory," *Kansas History* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 21 & 29, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=a57e7650-e623-49ab-b62e-b2c90d56c150%40sessionmgr4009>.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Waldenrath, "The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I," *Pennsylvania History* 42, no. 1 (Winter 1975): 25, accessed February 1, 2018, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/27772255?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27772255?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>7</sup> Willi Paul Adams, "Ethnic politicians and American nationalism during the first World War: Four German-born members," *American Studies International* 29, no. 1 (April 1991): 29, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=1&sid=3e71ce73-4f38-4c3e-bf9a-c6fc0574d874%40sessionmgr4007&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=9609191129&db=31h>.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen J. Gross, "Perils of Prussianism:" Main Street German America, Local Autonomy, and the Great War," *Agricultural History* 78, no. 1 (2004): 78 & 108-11, accessed February 3, 2018, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745091?&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745091?&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin Paul Hegi, "Old Time Good Germans:" German-Americans in Cooke County, Texas, during World War I," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* no. 2 (2005): 235, 236, 256, & 257, accessed February 5, 2018, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=a6d9b4c8-9f27-4e27-8180-9d93650650c0%40sessionmgr4010>.

The next author, Cristopher Capozzola, related to the theme of how World War One transformed German-American communities by focusing on how the meaning of citizenship changed in the United States. In fact, Capozzola had aspects of how the government and the war altered German American communities. He noted how government policies and citizen support of those policies changed the meaning of citizenship. In the end, ethnic groups had to support only American culture and not culture from their homeland.<sup>10</sup> Peter Weber researched how the Indianapolis *Sozialer Turnverein*, a German society in Indianapolis, Indiana, was able to survive the war despite all the negative effects of the war by losing some of its controversial cultural aspects, such as speaking in German. Thus, the society changed due to the war but did not lose all the cultural practices that it espoused.<sup>11</sup> The final source for the historiography is from Karen Guenther who focused on German churches in Reading, Pennsylvania and how the war affected them. Guenther found that the German churches continued during the war with little interruption except that they stopped preaching in German. Otherwise, the churches supported both the German view of the aggression of England in France in the war and the American war effort.<sup>12</sup>

Both historiographical themes influenced the English articles of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. There were policies created by the American government that helped to change the arguments of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*'s English articles when the United States entered the war. There were also ways that the war itself forced the *Scranton Wochenblatt* to promote certain aspects of the Pennsylvania German community and culture.

Peter Weber noted in his article that there were two theories related to the above historiographical information. The theories were the *ethnic disappearance* and *ethnic survival* theories. The former "emphasized the eradication of German culture" which is seen with "the closure of German-speaking newspapers, and the disappearance of [the] German language from American schools," which Weber also called the "Lusitania effect."<sup>13</sup> The latter theory was the ethnic survival theory which was that no matter the slight against a culture, it will survive, like the survival of some German cultural aspects in the United States today.<sup>14</sup> Weber noted "historical evidence, however, supports both ethnic disappearance and ethnic survival theories" which means that some ethnic communities keep their distinct identity but lose some of their cultural practices in favor of Americanization.<sup>15</sup> In reality, only Weber's article explicitly noted the two theories. No other article overtly noted either theory. It is possible that all the articles for this historiography supported the combination of both theories because all the German

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<sup>10</sup> Christopher Capozzola, "Legacies for Citizenship: Pinpointing Americans during and after World War I," *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 4 (September 2014): 714, 725, & 726, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&sid=cc0d4712-ea9b-4382-8280-c431c6f2e4ec%40sessionmgr4007>.

<sup>11</sup> Peter C. Weber, "Ethnic Identity during War: The Case of German American Societies during World War I," *Nonprofit And Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2014): 198-200, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/npvolsq43&id=1&size=2&collection=journals&index=journals/npvolsq>.

<sup>12</sup> Karen Guenther, "A Question of Loyalty: German Churches in Reading During the First World War," *Pennsylvania History* 84, no. 3 (2017): 342-343, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/pennhistory.84.3.0325>.

<sup>13</sup> Weber, "Ethnic Identity during War," 187.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 188. "Deutschtum" only appears in Weber's article, it could mean Germans.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 188.

communities exist to this day in one form or another. However, some articles did lean towards a specific theory despite containing aspects of both.

There were two articles that could have leaned towards the ethnic disappearance theory and two that could have leaned towards the ethnic survival theory. Tina Brakebill's article on the German community in McLean County, Illinois, and Christopher Capozzola's source on the changing of citizenship expectations both seem to have supported the disappearance theory.<sup>16</sup> Mark Kuss's article on the German community in New Orleans and Stephen Cross' work on the two rural German communities in Minnesota leaned towards the survival theory.<sup>17</sup> The following articles contained characteristics of both theories. Patricia Michaelis' article on the German American communities in Kansas, Alexander Waldenrath's piece on the Pennsylvania German newspapers, and Willi Paul Adams's research on the four German-born American politicians seem to have supported neither the ethnic survival nor disappearance theories.<sup>18</sup> Benjamin Paul Hegi's article on the German American communities in Cook County, Texas, Peter Weber's research on the German society in Indianapolis, and Karen Guenther's source on the German churches of Reading, Pennsylvania also seem to have leaned neither towards the ethnic disappearance nor ethnic survival theories but both, depending on certain parts of the German American culture that they discussed. However, only Weber explicitly stated that "neither the ethnic disappearance theory nor the ethnic survival theory appropriately describe" the changes of the German society during the war.<sup>19</sup> Characteristics of both theories appear to have affected the German community of Scranton and the *Scranton Wochenblatt* as most of the above sources appear to have taken.

Before the examination of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*'s English articles from World War One, it is important to first note why this and other German-language newspapers existed and the history of the communities that they served. There had been large migrations of Germans from the German states to Pennsylvania for centuries and their culture and communities varied. Over time, groups that had been in Pennsylvania for long enough had adopted aspects of American culture but still held onto aspects of the Germany that they had left behind. With waves of migrations of Germans to Pennsylvania, there became a layering of different Pennsylvania-German communities. Some communities were more assimilated into American culture and others were still very German. Yet, even the culturally German part of their communities varied depending on when the immigrants immigrated to Pennsylvania. Thus, not all the Pennsylvania German communities practiced the same cultural characteristics.<sup>20</sup> Despite the uniqueness of each community's culture, they all had similar German aspects, such as using the German language to communicate.

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<sup>16</sup> Brakebill, "From "German Days" to "100 Percent Americanism," 167-168 and Capozzola, "Legacies for Citizenship: Pinpointing Americans during and after World War I," 714, 725, & 726.

<sup>17</sup> Kuss, "Hey Man! Watch Your Language," 197 and Gross, "Perils of Prussianism," 78 & 108-11.

<sup>18</sup> Michaelis, "Crisis of Loyalty," 21 & 29; Waldenrath, "The German Language Newspapers in Pennsylvania During World War I," 25; and Adams, "Ethnic politicians and American nationalism during the first World War," 29.

<sup>19</sup> Hegi, "Old Time Good Germans," 235, 236, 256, & 257; Guenther, "A Question of Loyalty," 342-343; and Weber, "Ethnic Identity during War," 189.

<sup>20</sup> John A. Hawgood, *The tragedy of German-America* (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1970), 271.

The use of the German language was widespread in Pennsylvania from as early as the late seventeenth century until the late nineteenth century. The major supporter of this cultural aspect was the German-language newspapers. These newspapers mostly used German but sometimes some would print in English. There were two purposes of these newspapers. The first of these purposes was “to keep [Pennsylvania Germans] interested in and abreast of events in Germany.”<sup>21</sup> However, as time moved on, many Pennsylvania Germans lost interest in the events of Germany especially as each community became more assimilated into American culture.<sup>22</sup> The other purpose of these German-language newspapers was for “softening the shock of transition from German to English in the Pennsylvania German area.”<sup>23</sup> For all of those who came to Pennsylvania, the German-language newspapers provided the German speakers the ability to understand the “state, national and international affairs” that was going on around them.<sup>24</sup> By keeping the Pennsylvania Germans informed, it prevented such community members from being “condemned to illiteracy.”<sup>25</sup> The newspapers provided information for German speakers while they helped settle German speakers into their new home by preventing major cultural shocks.<sup>26</sup> In fact, early in Pennsylvania’s history, the use of the German language was seen as crucial in the Pennsylvania German communities so much so that if one did not know German, they were seen as “intellectually deficient.”<sup>27</sup> This became a common belief among Pennsylvanians and the use of German in newspapers was seen as important for communication. Benjamin Franklin saw the importance of printing in German and created the first German-language newspaper, *Die Philadelphische Zeitung* (The Philadelphian Newspaper). Franklin’s ambitions with the first German-language newspaper would have worked better for him had he not attacked the German immigrants in the paper’s articles.<sup>28</sup> Yet, even Franklin saw the importance of the German language in Pennsylvania.

The use of German in Pennsylvania did not come without some hostility though. The nineteenth century in Pennsylvania had provided tolerance for the use of German in bilingual communities.<sup>29</sup> Despite the mild tolerance for the use of German in large German communities, by 1876, there was a sharp decline in the use of German in Pennsylvania. More and more people were promoting the use of English to assimilate into American culture, even within the Pennsylvanian communities themselves.<sup>30</sup> Accompanying these internal blows to the use of the German language, external pressures also played their part in the decline of the use of German. The Pennsylvanian government reluctantly supported bilingual education in schools since the early nineteenth century, but as the turn of the century grew closer, the Pennsylvania government took steps to end bilingual education in public schools. First, the Pennsylvania government took steps to end the training of bilingual educators which aided in the decline in the teaching of

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<sup>21</sup> Hawgood, *The tragedy of German-America*, 272.

<sup>22</sup> Hawgood, *The tragedy of German-America*, 272.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph Wood, “Journalism Among the Pennsylvania Germans,” in *The Pennsylvania Germans*, ed. Ralph Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942), 131.

<sup>24</sup> Wood, “Journalism Among the Pennsylvania Germans,” 131.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>29</sup> William W. Donner, “Neither Germans nor Englishmen, but Americans:” education, assimilation, and ethnicity among nineteenth-century Pennsylvania Germans,” *Pennsylvania History* 75, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 201, accessed January 31, 2018, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/27778830?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27778830?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>30</sup> Donner, “Neither Germans nor Englishmen, but Americans,” 211.

German in schools.<sup>31</sup> A final blow to bilingual education came when the Pennsylvania government outlawed the German language in elementary schools. The decline in the use of German for the Pennsylvania German communities and through the laws of the Pennsylvania government weakened the strong German cultural communities that relied on the German language to promote their culture.<sup>32</sup> With the loss of bilingual education in German communities, there came a decline in the Pennsylvania German culture. The German language press attempted to stave off the decline of the German language and culture in Pennsylvania which succeeded to an extent. This success was short-lived due to the start of World War One and the rise of intolerance for all things German.

In 1914, the opening shots of the First World War rang out in Sarajevo with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Within weeks, the world was at war except for the United States and several other countries which decided to take a neutral stance. Despite this neutral stance, many American citizens and parts of the American government gave favor to the Allies who turned against the German Empire. This created a special problem for Pennsylvanian Germans who were ethnically German but American citizens. According to the 1910 Federal Census, Pennsylvania had a large percentage of the population of foreign-born whites. This came to 18.8 percent.<sup>33</sup> Of that percentage, 20.2 percent were of German ancestry.<sup>34</sup> Thus, there was a strong tie to German culture in Pennsylvania at the start of the war due to this large group of German immigrants. A large proportion of the native white population which was 78.7 percent of the total Pennsylvania population included Germans who had lived in Pennsylvania for decades, even centuries, and who also held ties to their German culture at the beginning of the war.<sup>35</sup> The largest ethnic group in Pennsylvania at the start of the war was German, which only heightened the American fear of German Pennsylvanians.

The fear of German communities was not a new phenomenon by the start of the war. Benjamin Franklin had tried to close German institutions in the 1750s for fear of the ever-growing enclaves of Germans in early Pennsylvania. Yet these enclaves were important parts of immigrants' survival in a new world. They provided protection and familiarity. That did not stop groups from trying to assimilate German communities to American ideals. However, the more the nativist groups pushed for assimilation, the more the German communities resisted by returning to their cultural roots. The German language and the newspapers that used it were a basis of resistance.<sup>36</sup> This is true with the beginning years of World War One when German-language papers like the *Scranton Wochenblatt* promoted German culture and heritage in the

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<sup>31</sup> Cheryl T. Desmond, "German Language and Education in Pennsylvania, 1683-1911: Cultural Resistance and State Accommodation," *American Education Research Association (Atlanta, Georgia), ERIC, EBSCOhost* (April 1993): 21-22, accessed February 1, 2018, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED363124.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> Desmond, "German Language and Education in Pennsylvania, 1683-1911," 21-22.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910: Volume III: Population 1910: Reports by States, With Statistics for Counties, Cities, and Other Civil Divisions*, prepared under William C. Hunt, USCB, 1910, accessed February 10, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html>.

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910*.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Agnes Bretting, "The Old Home and the New: The Problem of Americanization," in *Germans to America: 300 Years of Immigration, 1683 to 1983*, ed. Günter Moltmann, trans. Colin C. Boone (Stuttgart: Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 1982), 153-157 & Hawgood, *The tragedy of German-America*, 277.



United States. The promotion of German culture was in response to the attacks of anti-German media outlets.

Allied propaganda, specifically from Great Britain, and media outlets in the northeast United States actively portrayed Germans and German culture as evil. In response, German language papers in the United States, and in Pennsylvania especially, worked to counteract the anti-German propaganda.<sup>37</sup> Some newspapers would try to portray the German community that they served as patriotic and connect their existence to past heroic Germans such as Baron von Steuben and the Pennsylvania Germans that fought for American independence and others like the *Scranton Wochenblatt* promoted aspects of German culture such as literature.<sup>38</sup> The only English articles that were found in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* from 1914 until the United States entered World War One were actually advertisements for German literature. There were a total five of these advertisements selling German literature from the 15<sup>th</sup> of April to the 13<sup>th</sup> of May in 1915. It was a short run program for the paper but it shows that the *Scranton Wochenblatt* was trying to portray literature as important to German culture and Scranton's German community. The advertisement was promoting German literature as "unsurpassed and perhaps unequalled [sic] by that of any other country."<sup>39</sup> They promoted literature "TRANSLATED INTO

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<sup>37</sup> Chad R. Fulwider, *German Propaganda and U.S. Neutrality in World War I* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri, 2016), 5, 19, & 22-23, accessed February 3, 2018,

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxLYmtfXzE1MDExMzNfX0FO0?sid=c39474ab-c3f0-45a6-abc5-91d14e8eee01@pdc-v-sessmgr01&vid=2&format=EB&rid=1>.

<sup>38</sup> Waldenrath, "The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I," 36-37 & Fulwider, *German Propaganda and U.S. Neutrality in World War I*, 27.

<sup>39</sup> "German Culture Must Be Upheld!," *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 15, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-04-15/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=5&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=Americans+German+GERMAN&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; "German Culture Must Be Upheld!," *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 22, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-04-22/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=3&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=Americans+German+GERMAN&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; "German Culture Must Be Upheld!," *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 29, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-04-29/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=1&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=American+Americans+German+GERMAN&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; "German Culture Must Be Upheld!," *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 6, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-05-06/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=2&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=American+Americans+German+GERMAN&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; & "German Culture Must Be Upheld!," *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 13, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-05-13/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=4&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=American+Americans+German+GERMAN&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.



PERFECT ENGLISH” for English readers to be able to read.<sup>40</sup> Some of the authors that accompanied the advertisements included Johann Wolfgang Von [sic] Goethe and George William Friedrich Hegel and even composers such as Ludwig Van [sic] Beethoven. The advertisements even started out with a plea “To All Americans” that stated, “Before you pass judgment on Germany, learn what German Culture means.”<sup>41</sup>

Despite the plea and the promotion of the German literature that showed the importance of an aspect of German culture, the advertisements did have an unappealing picture that might have pushed people away from the German literature. The picture’s caption read, “Imperial Guard Passing in Review Before Their Emperor-War having just been declared.”<sup>42</sup> The caption’s picture showed Imperial Guards in full uniform and weaponry marching in front of Kaiser Wilhelm II.<sup>43</sup> Americans believed that German culture contained militarism which made the picture and caption an unwise choice. Since the outbreak of the war, many Americans found German militarism distasteful and seen as the worst part of Germany, at least since the war had started. Although the advertisements intended the promotion of the German literature as ideal, it may, in fact, have had a repulsive effect for Scranton’s English speakers. These advertisements were the only English articles that were located for the *Scranton Wochenblatt* prior to the United States’ entry into World War One. Once the United States entered the war, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* began to publish more English-language articles, possibly in the attempt to portray the paper and community as more Americanized.

The declaration of war by the United States on Germany did not make life for Pennsylvania German communities any easier and it made the existence of German language newspapers even more dangerous. Once Congress finally granted President Wilson’s request for war on Germany, on April 6, 1917, the United States was officially in the war and this led to a further crackdown on all German culture and communities by other American citizens and the United States government.<sup>44</sup> Pressures from English speaking American citizens that lived around the German communities in Pennsylvania put pressure on those communities to become Americanized. As an example, several of the German churches in Reading discontinued holding services in German and local schools stopped teaching German to show their patriotism. The churches also held rallies to support their soldiers from their community fighting for the United States.<sup>45</sup> Life for Pennsylvania German soldiers was not much easier despite fighting for the United States. Two examples were that a Schuylkill County Pennsylvania German transferred to another unit during basic training because his commanding officer considered him a spy for

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<sup>40</sup> “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 15, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 22, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 29, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 6, 1915; & “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 13, 1915.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 15, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 22, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 29, 1915; “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 6, 1915; & “German Culture Must Be Upheld!,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, May 13, 1915.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Daniel G. Donalson, *The Espionage and Sedition Acts of World War I: Using Wartime Loyalty Laws for Revenge and Profit* (El Paso: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2012, 2, accessed February 3, 2018, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ship/reader.action?docID=1057800&query=>.

<sup>45</sup> Guenther, “A Question of Loyalty: German Churches in Reading During the First World War,” 338-339.

singing a German folk song and the French arrested soldiers from Berks County while on the front lines for speaking in a German dialect.<sup>46</sup> For Pennsylvania Germans, the declaration of war only heightened suspicions and attacks on German culture. After the declaration of war in 1917, the Provost General Crowder offered to send military support “into Pennsylvania to suppress the Pennsylvania Germans,” to which Governor Martin G. Brumbaugh, a German Pennsylvanian, politely refused.<sup>47</sup>

The refused offers of military suppression of the German Pennsylvanians were not the only outcome of the general fear of American citizens. Actions against German Americans took many paths. One German American, Julius Drachsler, noted that the hysteria against all things German manifested in many ways like citizens renaming German named streets, asking governments to resend charters to German societies, and banning the teaching of German by education authorities and even by students. Drachsler even noted that one city took all the German texts from students and burned them. He added that citizens worked “to persuade advertisers not to use the German language press.”<sup>48</sup> With the increased challenges to the German language press after the declaration of war, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* “illustrated the mental gymnastics necessary to alter [the paper’s] former policy which seemed at least sympathetic to the German cause” when the attitudes of most Americans changed as America became the enemy of Germany.<sup>49</sup>

Four of the thirteen English articles that were in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* after the declaration of war actively showed the change in attitude from promoting German culture to denouncing Germany and anti-American activities so to promote the community and the newspaper as patriotic Americans. The first of these articles, published on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1917, came from the *New York Evening Mail* and its title was “Old and New at Columbia.”<sup>50</sup> The article praised Columbia University but more importantly, it praised the people that made it a great institution. The article stated that “the largest stake in the university is held by 10,000 of the best homes in the land, who have contributed their boys and girls to the student body. Without them the land and buildings would be a dead, inert mass.”<sup>51</sup> The reasoning for promoting the individual families and students that make this university and others like it was because the article was promoting the people over the wealthy board members. It is “the people of America as a whole [were] large stock holders [sic] in a university” just as it was “the labor of the people [have] built it” which was more important for Columbia than “the interest of the

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<sup>46</sup> Arthur D. Graeff, “The Pennsylvania Germans as Soldiers,” in *The Pennsylvania Germans*, ed. Ralph Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942), 235.

<sup>47</sup> Graeff, “The Pennsylvania Germans as Soldiers,” 234.

<sup>48</sup> Julius Drachsler, *Democracy and Assimilation: The Blending of Immigrant Heritages in America* (New York, 1920) cited in “Anti-German Feeling in America-World War I-1917,” in *The Germans in America, 1607-1970: A Chronology & Fact Book*, ed. Howard B. Furer (Dobbs Ferry: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1973), 133-134.

<sup>49</sup> Waldenrath, “The German Language Newspapers in Pennsylvania During World War I,” 37-38.

<sup>50</sup> *New York Evening Mail*, “Old and New at Columbia,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, November 29, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-11-29/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=3&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=i+I+war+world+w%C3%A4r&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>51</sup> *New York Evening Mail*, “Old and New at Columbia,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, November 29, 1917.

moneyed individuals.”<sup>52</sup> The article noted that the control of the “moneyed individuals” was gradually declining as the article regarded other despotic rulers.<sup>53</sup> The article connected the loss of power by wealthy individuals in the United States with that of Germany. It stated that “it is nice to see how in all of the world to-day the intrenched [sic] forces of power and privilege are making their last stand against forces of democracy and freedom. The czar [sic] made his effort and failed. The Kaiser has his back against the wall.”<sup>54</sup> It was a roundabout way to make a point but by using this article in the *Scranton Wochenblatt*, the paper was showing that it and its community of Pennsylvania Germans supported democracy and the people of the United States over the wealthy and powerful corrupt leaders of the world, including the Kaiser. It helped paint the community as patriotic.

Another article that turned against Germany and its culture originally came from the *New York American* and titled “A Plea for Universal Training.”<sup>55</sup> The *Scranton Wochenblatt* published this article on December 27, 1917. Unlike the article mentioned above, it was much more direct in promoting the American cause in the war and denouncing Germany. The article called for greater activity in terms of universal training. It mentioned that “the selective draft” which the article stated that it was “an admirable policy for the beginning of the war, and [that it] did its wonderful work.”<sup>56</sup> Yet the article did criticize the United States for not being prepared enough stating that if the United States had “a greater navy on the seas and a better army on the land and a nobler fleet in the air and the conservation of the mighty engines of war invented by our genius and energy, that the tragic Lusitania would never have been sunk or the murderous U-boat sped on its brutal mission beneath the waves.”<sup>57</sup> This article both criticized Germany for its brutal tactics in the war and the United States for not being prepared enough. Using this article that mentioned the Lusitania in the context that it did, helped show that Scranton’s German community thought the sinking of the Lusitania to be horrible even though their opinion before the war was that it was not Germany’s aggressive mistake to have sunk the Lusitania. Even though the article did criticize American unpreparedness for the war, it did promote the intelligence and power of the United States to prevent German atrocities in the war, thus promoted the patriotic support of the German community in Scranton. The article even went further to add that “we should begin to train our youth from eighteen to twenty one [sic] and to make them fit physically and by discipline to come quickly and effectively when they are called.”<sup>58</sup> It promoted the idea to always have a young trained male population prepared to fight. It furthered the image of Scranton’s German community as patriotic and supporters of the American cause to end the war of Germany’s aggression.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> *New York Evening Mail*, “Old and New at Columbia,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, November 29, 1917.

<sup>55</sup> *New York American*, “A Plea for Universal Training,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, December 27, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-12-27/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=4&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>56</sup> *New York American*, “A Plea for Universal Training,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, December 27, 1917.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> *New York American*, “A Plea for Universal Training,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, December 27, 1917.

The final two articles that denounced Germany and supported the American war effort were both related to sugar rationing. The articles were “Sugar Hoarders Aides of Kaiser, Says Mr. Heinz” and “Sugar Allotment Cut Still Further.”<sup>59</sup> Both published in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* on July 18 and August 8, 1918, respectively. They were the last two English articles published by the *Scranton Wochenblatt* during the war. Both articles mentioned how much sugar each person could get and how much sugar people should use.<sup>60</sup> However, what was important were the words and sentences that denounced Germany and promoted Americans. The first article noted that any person who hoarded sugar “is not only a slacker but is actually helping the Kaiser to win the war.”<sup>61</sup> The hoarder, as the article noted, “is an enemy of society” and that “no red blooded [sic] American, knowing the facts, can be guilty of hoarding.” Those people would be giving “devoted aid to the Hun.”<sup>62</sup> The second article also followed similar rhetoric as the first article. It mentioned that a hoarder of sugar “is thus proving his willingness to help the kaiser” [sic] and that “certainly no one will help the kaiser [sic] more than the person who willfully disregards the voluntary rationing” of sugar.<sup>63</sup> The article also noted that true Americans “will demonstrate that they are willing to comply with whatever is asked of them, if it will help to win the war.”<sup>64</sup> The use of these articles in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* showed that the paper and the community that they represented would back the war effort by not being hoarders for they were Americans and that they found those that hoarded sugar to be enemies of their community as much as they were enemies of the United States. The use of the word “Hun,” which was a derogatory word when applied to Germans, was another way that the community and newspaper were distancing themselves from Germany.<sup>65</sup>

As the above English articles demonstrated, there was a change in tone of the English articles from before and after the United States entered the war. The articles changed from promoting German culture to defending American activities and attacking those that might have been doing activities that harmed the American war effort, like hoarding sugar. There was an overall change in other parts of the *Scranton Wochenblatt* beyond the English articles. Like many other German-language newspapers, pictures in the press changed to showing the American war effort and pictures of “American soldiers replaced those of German troops” that the German-language press in Pennsylvania originally depicted.<sup>66</sup> There was a stark change in

<sup>59</sup> “Sugar Hoarders Aides of Kaiser, Says Mr. Heinz,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 18, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-07-18/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=2&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=Food+food&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=Food+Allotment&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>, & “Sugar Allotment Cut Still Further,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, August 8, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-08-08/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=08%2F1%2F1918&index=6&date2=08%2F31%2F1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=&dateFilterType=range&page=1>.

<sup>60</sup> “Sugar Hoarders Aides of Kaiser, Says Mr. Heinz,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 18, 1918 & “Sugar Allotment Cut Still Further,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, August 8, 1918.

<sup>61</sup> “Sugar Hoarders Aides of Kaiser, Says Mr. Heinz,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 18, 1918.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> “Sugar Allotment Cut Still Further,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, August 8, 1918.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> “Sugar Hoarders Aides of Kaiser, Says Mr. Heinz,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 18, 1918.

<sup>66</sup> Waldenrath, “The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I,” 39.

the promotions and articles of newspapers like the *Scranton Wochenblatt* in terms of the war effort. As the German American, Julius Drachsler, noted: “the declaration of war by Congress seemed to have silenced all dissenting voices.”<sup>67</sup>

The change in attitude in the German language press related to the overall change in American attitude, the coercive actions of Americans to assimilate German communities in Pennsylvania, and the declaration of war by Congress. Yet, a large change came due to policies of the United States government, especially with the passing of the Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917 and 1918. These acts made illegal any activity or utterance against the policies and actions of the American government and punished those believed to be aiding the enemy.<sup>68</sup> These acts attempted to unify the country behind the American war effort but they also allowed for suppression of German Americans. Overall, there were around 2,000 cases investigated by the FBI in relation to these acts. Of the total cases, 151 came from Americans who had personal motivations and agendas against individuals, especially of minority groups. The possibility of these personal attacks came levied with the support of the American government that was promoting Americans practically to spy on one another.<sup>69</sup>

The largest minority group that usually came under attack with these acts were the German Americans. Of the 151 personal cases alone, half of the cases were against German Americans. Being an American of German ancestry made accusations of espionage and or sedition more credible even if proven innocent. Even innocent German Americans remained suspect after the investigation. German Americans also turned against each other. Usually, native-born German Americans would accuse German immigrants of espionage and or sedition to portray themselves as patriotic Americans.<sup>70</sup> These federal acts made it more difficult for German-language papers like the *Scranton Wochenblatt* to support and promote the German view and the culture of their community.

Despite all the challenges and barriers attempting to prevent German-language newspapers from printing what they believed was correct in respect to their communities, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* published several English articles that actively denounced the Allies’ cause in one form or another. In fact, of the thirteen articles located for the newspaper after the United States entered the war, five were against the Allies’ cause. Two of those five articles were the same and were petitions created by an Irish group, known as *The Irish World*. They were titled, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland.”<sup>71</sup> These

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<sup>67</sup> Drachsler, *Democracy and Assimilation: The Blending of Immigrant Heritages in America*, 133.

<sup>68</sup> Donalson, *The Espionage and Sedition Acts of World War I*, 13-15.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 1, & 5-6.

<sup>70</sup> Donalson, *The Espionage and Sedition Acts of World War I*, 64, 167-168, & 175.

<sup>71</sup> *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, June 7, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-06-07/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1914&index=4&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=I+i+war+world&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>, & *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 19, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-07-19/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1914&index=5&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&w>



petitions appeared not long after the United States declared war. The *Scranton Wochenblatt* printed them on June 7 and July 19, 1917. The petitions were not directly criticizing the United States but they did criticize her ally, Great Britain. The petitions stated, “that Ireland is a distinct nation, deprived of Her liberty by force and held in subjection by England by military power alone” and they further asked that the United States demand Ireland’s freedom.<sup>72</sup> The petitions viewed that the American “Government is honor bound” to promote freedom in all corners of the world “whether they be under the jurisdiction of Germany, like Belgium, or of England, like Ireland.”<sup>73</sup> These petitions blatantly attacked England as a suppressive power like Germany which also spoke against Germany in the war. The petitions also had a tone that was mildly critical of the United States government for they added that “America cannot be a party to any scheme of world-peace which withholds from any nation the God-given right of freedom, the only final settlement must be the complete independence of Ireland.”<sup>74</sup> The tone implied that if Congress did not act accordingly, then the United States would be hypocritical. Even though these petitions came after the United States declared war, the petitions still held a pre-war theme of “anti-allied sentiment” that the newspapers previously espoused.<sup>75</sup> Despite the tone against the allies, the petitions protected the newspaper and the German community in Scranton by adding, “every lover of Democracy, irresponsive of sex, race, and religion, is asked to sign this Petition.”<sup>76</sup> Thus the *Scranton Wochenblatt* showed that democracy was still important to it and its community as was the general feeling in America during the war with Germany.

Several of the English articles that came after the petitions were more openly critical of the actions of the American government during the war. Two articles specifically criticized the American government in some way but both originally came from a different news agency before their reprint in the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. The *New Republic* printed both the articles entitled “War-Propaganda” and “When the Youngest Critic has Died,” that were later published in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* on November 22<sup>nd</sup> of 1917 and January 24, 1918, respectively.<sup>77</sup>

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[ords=I+i+war+world&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.](#)

<sup>72</sup> *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, June 7, 1917 & *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 19, 1917.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Waldenrath, “The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I,” 25.

<sup>76</sup> *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, June 7, 1917 & *The Irish World*, “Petition To The President and Congress For The Independence of Ireland,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, July 19, 1917.

<sup>77</sup> *New Republic*, “War-Propaganda,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, November 22, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018,

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-11-22/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=0&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&ords=I+i+ied+war+WAR+wars+world&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>, & *New Republic*, “When the Youngest Critic has Died,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 24, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-01-24/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=1&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&ords=i+I+ied+war+Wars+world&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

The article entitled “War-Propaganda” brought attention to the policies and actions of the propaganda arm of the American government and society which had begun to undermine the American moral war effort with “coercive censorship over public opinion.”<sup>78</sup> The article went on to add that the propaganda that had been espoused for the American war effort “[was] already compromising the success of the President’s attempt to impair German morale, and unless it [was] checked its effect on the morale of this country [was] likely to be no less deplorable.”<sup>79</sup> The fall in American morale was partially attributed to “the most malignant and venomous passions” that had been called out “in the name of American patriotism” and that was directed “against everyone in this country who [disagreed] with” the rhetoric of the propaganda.<sup>80</sup>

The article titled, “When the Youngest Critic Has Died,” was less critical of the government but it was more in defense of the criticism of articles like the one mentioned in the previous paragraph.<sup>81</sup> The most critical portion of this article was when it mentioned the report that President Wilson “has expressed a wish that all critics might be exported. In his heart, he may well have wished at times that all critics were dead.”<sup>82</sup> The critics would most certainly include German-language newspapers like the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. Yet, the article then defended the criticism that it had uttered like the article in the previous paragraph. The article noted that “criticism has an essential function to perform, and no states can safely dispense with it.”<sup>83</sup> An example from the articles stated, “If the war machine is not working perfectly somebody ought to say it.”<sup>84</sup> The article concluded that “criticism is like a windstorm in a forest” for “it topples over aie [sic] trunks that disfigure the living forest and infest it with decay.”<sup>85</sup> With both articles, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* was both denouncing the actions of the American government and defending their right and importance to do so. The argument and tone of the articles reflected Scranton’s German community’s dissatisfaction with the propaganda that attacked them and the American government for not stopping such attacks. Yet, by using articles published previously by another newspaper, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* protected itself and its community from direct attack by Americans and the government since the *Scranton Wochenblatt* had not written the articles.

The last English article in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* that denounced the allied war effort was “Rascals and Patriots,” which came out on January 10, 1918. The article criticized the wealthy members of boards that promoted the war effort and to some extent the government. The article criticized members of boards related to the war effort that “[handed] out contracts to corporations in which they [were] directly or indirectly interested, at prices far in excess of reason” and which referred to those powerful people as “rascals even though they [prated] much about their patriotism.”<sup>86</sup> The criticism fell on those people that called out for rationing of

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<sup>78</sup> *New Republic*, “War-Propaganda,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, November 22, 1917.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *New Republic*, “When the Youngest Critic has Died,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 24, 1918.

<sup>82</sup> *New Republic*, “When the Youngest Critic has Died,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 24, 1918.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> “Rascals and Patriots,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 10, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-01-10/ed-1/seq->



everything “while secretly hoarding foods at the expense of their country” and the government because the government knew of this but did little which “[undermined] the confidence of the people.”<sup>87</sup> This article showed the dissatisfaction with the people running the war effort and the government for turning a blind eye against corruption. The *Scranton Wochenblatt* was willing to publish this article, like the previous ones, to show that Scranton’s German community did not like the hypocritical actions, degrading propaganda, and the crackdown on freedom of speech that the United States government promoted for the Allied war effort. It must be remembered that “German-Americans were even publicly insulted and ostracized for their criticism of [the United States’] policies” and that German-language newspapers were censored.”<sup>88</sup> Despite this, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* and the community that it served still published English articles criticizing the public policy during the war so that their English-speaking neighbors could read about their criticisms.

Not all the English newspapers that the *Scranton Wochenblatt* published after the United States entered the war were openly critical to the Germans nor the Allied powers. Of the thirteen English articles published in the newspaper after the United States entered the war, four articles were ambiguous to either side yet they still told a narrative of the German community of Scranton, which was that the community contained concerned and patriotic Americans. The *Scranton Wochenblatt* published the first of these articles on June 14, 1917. “How Shall We Pay For The War,” by Edwin R. A. Seligman, looked at the possible ways that the United States government would pay for the war effort.<sup>89</sup> The article did criticize the American government for its plan to raise war revenue based in large on taxes which would place the burden of paying on the American people who were already suffering from wartime restrictions and criticized the American government for thinking it necessary “not to rely to a large extent on loans at the outset of a war.”<sup>90</sup> Despite the critical nature of the article, it did also support the Allied ideals when it praised the British for developing a war revenue plan that both utilized loans and an “income tax [that did] not exceed 42 percent.”<sup>91</sup> The article closed with stating that it hoped “that the Senate will reduce the total rate on the highest incomes to 34 percent, or at most to 40 percent” and utilize war loans so that the American people would not be burdened further by the war.<sup>92</sup> The article showed that the German community of the *Scranton Wochenblatt* was critical of some policies of the American government for the war but also that they believed those policies of the Allies were important and good in helping the American people to win and outlast the war.

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[5/#date1=1914&index=1&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-06-14/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=4&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=allotted+Food&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=Food+Allotment&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1).

<sup>87</sup> “Rascals and Patriots,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 10, 1918.

<sup>88</sup> Waldenrath, “The German Language Newspaper in Pennsylvania During World War I,” 39-40.

<sup>89</sup> Edwin R. A. Seligman, “How Shall We Pay For The War?” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, June 14, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-06-14/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=4&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=allotted+Food&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=Food+Allotment&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>90</sup> Seligman, “How Shall We Pay For The War?” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, June 14, 1917.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

The article titled, “Immigration may turn to Europe,” by Richard Barry, followed a similar pattern as the one in the previous paragraph but it focused on immigration and emigration after the war.<sup>93</sup> Published on December 13, 1917, the article feared that the United States would lose many of its newer immigrants as the war ended because “European governments [were] going to place restrictions on emigration” to the United States and like what was happening in Germany and Ireland where large feudal style estates were divided to provide land for the many poorer people as an incentive to stay in Europe and grow the destroyed countries.<sup>94</sup> The article believed that the United States did not do enough to keep poor immigrants in the United States even though “we [had] land in abundance.”<sup>95</sup> To keep the United States growing agriculturally and economically, those lands needed to be divided among the immigrants.<sup>96</sup> This article, like the previous one, criticized the American government’s policies but provided ways to change them to better the United States. Again, this showed that the German community of Scranton only wanted to see America better itself and be better even though this last article in a way praised an action of Germany which also showed that the community still saw some positives with Germany.

Victor Karminski’s article, “Steel Exports After The War,” published on January 31, 1918, both promoted and criticized German and American practices as well as warned America of Germany’s economic strength.<sup>97</sup> The article focused around the belief that after the war, German trade would not pose a strong opponent because it was based on “government aid” that was weakened by the war but the article argued that German trade would still be a strong opponent in the market because “Germany’s business [was] built upon a more sound foundation than mere government stimulation.”<sup>98</sup> The article noted that Germany’s “strength [was] not government ownership or government subsidy” but its “strength [came] from the inherent or developed qualities” of every level of the economy as well as the government “allowing them to co-operate” and “[promised] them protection of their property or trade rights they [acquired].”<sup>99</sup> The article viewed this form of economic and government cooperation as more efficient than the cooperation in the United States and argued that the United States “[could] adopt German efficiency without adopting German morality.”<sup>100</sup> The *Scranton Wochenblatt* showed that its community believed that some parts of German culture were great and at the same time showed

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<sup>93</sup> Richard Barry, “Immigration may turn to Europe,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, December 13, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-12-13/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=2&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=I+i+war+world+w%C3%A4r&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>94</sup> Barry, “Immigration may turn to Europe,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, December 13, 1917.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Victor Karminski, “Steel Exports After The War,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 31, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-01-31/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=6&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=American+German&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetxt=&andtext=German+Americans&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>98</sup> Karminski, “Steel Exports After The War,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, January 31, 1918.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

that American economic practices needed to be updated to make them stronger. The German community of Scranton again criticized American policies but showed that their German culture, which was not all bad, could aid in making America better.

The last English article that showed the *Scranton Wochenblatt* neither supporting either side in the war was from the *New York Evening Mail*. Titled, “Co-operation or Socialism,” and published on February 14, 1918, it discussed what would be the new economic form in the United States, socialism or co-operation.<sup>101</sup> The article appeared to lean towards co-operation because it felt that in socialism, “the consumers would pay as much as they do now and the taxpayers more” where co-operation was, “the self-interest of the consumers [who] would dictate such a close supervision of the mechanism of distribution that its cost would be kept low.”<sup>102</sup> With the publication of this article, in the *Scranton Wochenblatt*, it showed the German community of Scranton did not support socialism which had begun to cause fears of its surfacing in the United States at that time in the war since the Bolshevik Revolution had already begun in Russia. Beyond this, this article was an outlier compared to the other English articles considered to support neither side in the war. The other articles criticized the policies of the United States as well as some German culture while it promoted German or British culture to help make America better. This article showed the community’s concern for America’s future alone. It also, along with all the other English articles of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*, showed that the German community of Scranton was discontent with their situation in the war but also were patriotic Americans who wanted to see America do better.

There were several articles printed throughout the entire span of the war but were not actual articles promoting or discussing a view. One group of articles titled, “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” only existed in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* after October of 1916.<sup>103</sup> The statements

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<sup>101</sup> *New York Evening Mail*, “Co-Operation or Socialism,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 14, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-02-14/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=6&date2=1919&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=i+I+war+War+world+w%C3%A4r&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetext=&andtext=World+War+I&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>102</sup> *New York Evening Mail*, “Co-Operation or Socialism,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 14, 1918.

<sup>103</sup> “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 4, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-04-04/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1914&index=0&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=1912+24+Act+acting+August+Circulation+circulation+Congress+etc+Etc+management+Manager+managers+Managing+managing+ownership+Ownership+required+Statement+statement+statements&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetext=&andtext=Statement+of+Ownership%2C+Management%2C+Circulation%2C+Etc.%2C+required+by+the+Act+of+Congress+of+August+24%2C+1912&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 12, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-04-12/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1914&index=13&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, October 4, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018,

themselves stated that this statement was “required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” yet they had not appeared until four years later.<sup>104</sup> The timing showed that the *Scranton Wochenblatt* was attempting to follow the laws of the United States once German Pennsylvanians came under more scrutiny as the war progressed. This, in turn, showed that the community the *Scranton Wochenblatt* represented were law-abiding citizens of the United States.

The other group of articles that also followed this similar pattern was titled, “Report Of The Controller of Lackawanna County,” and appeared once every year from 1914 to 1918. The Pennsylvania government had not required the publication of these reports in the newspapers but were required to be published by the Controller’s office of Lackawanna County.<sup>105</sup> By

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<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-10-04/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1914&index=2&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=1912+24+Act+acting+August+Circulation+circulation+Congress+Etc+etc+Management+management+Manager+managers+Managing+managing+Ownership+ownership+required+Statement+statement+statements&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Statement+of+Ownership%2C+Management%2C+Circulation%2C+Etc.%2C+required+by+the+Act+of+Congress+of+August+24%2C+1912&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; & “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, October 5, 1916, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1916-10-05/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=1&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=1912+24+Act+acting+August+Circulation+circulation+Congress+etc+etc+Management+Manager+managers+Managing+managing+ownership+Ownership+required+Statement+statement+statements&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Statement+of+Ownership%2C+Management%2C+Circulation%2C+Etc.%2C+required+by+the+Act+of+Congress+of+August+24%2C+1912&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>104</sup> “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 4, 1918; “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, April 12, 1917; “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, October 4, 1917; & “Statement of Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, October 5, 1916.

<sup>105</sup> “Bericht des Controllers von Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 5, 1914, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1914-02-05/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=6&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 1, 1917, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1917-02-01/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=5&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 3, 1916, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1916-02-03/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=8&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 4, 1915, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1915-02-04/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1914&index=9&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&w>



publishing these statements, it showed that the German community of Scranton again contained law-abiding citizens but who also found it important to know how efficiently their community was being run. The reports first appeared in 1895 but publication in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* only happened during the war years from 1914 to 1918, except for once in 1910, again in 1911, and once in 1912. Also, the one statement published in 1914 had a German title, “Bericht des Controllers von Lackawanna County,” which may have been an attempt to connect the German side of the community with the American law abiding citizens around them.<sup>106</sup>

There were few English articles published in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* from 1914 to 1918 yet they attempted to promote some part of Scranton’s German community’s culture and ideals. Before the United States entered the war, the articles or adds promoted German culture outright. After the United States entered the war, the tone of the articles changed from outright support of German culture to criticism of both sides in the war. Four of those thirteen articles printed after the declaration of war promoted the idea that the German community in Scranton was American by denouncing the Germans and their supporters. Another five of the English articles were critical of the Allied policies during the war, even the United States, despite the threats that loomed over the *Scranton Wochenblatt* and Scranton’s German community with the Espionage and Sedition Acts and the general coercion of the American people to assimilate. The feelings in these articles portrayed the feelings of dismay of the German community. The last four of the thirteen articles that were published were neither being really critical of either side but written with concern about policies and actions in the United States that could be fixed to better the United States. Again, this showed that the German community that the *Scranton Wochenblatt* represented to have been composed of concerned citizens for the well being of the United States.

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[ords=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-02-07/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=7&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&ords=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1); & “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 7, 1918, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-02-07/ed-1/seq-5/#date1=1914&index=7&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&ords=soldiers+Soldiers&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=Soldier&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

<sup>106</sup> “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 3, 1910, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed March 20, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1910-02-03/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1900&index=1&date2=1914&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&word=s=CONTROLLER+COUNTRY+LACKAWANNA+REPORT&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=Report+Of+The+Controller+Of+Lackawanna+County&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 9, 1911, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed April 28, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1911-02-09/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1895&index=0&date2=1918&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&word=s=REPORT&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=Report+Of+The&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; “Report Of The Controller Of Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 15, 1912, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed March 20, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1912-02-15/ed-1/seq-8/#date1=1900&index=0&date2=1914&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&word=s=CONTROLLER+COUNTRY+LACKAWANNA+REPORT&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=Report+Of+The+Controller+Of+Lackawanna+County&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>; & “Bericht des Controllers von Lackawanna County,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, February 5, 1914.

The statements that were also represented in the *Scranton Wochenblatt* primarily during the war years showed that the newspaper was trying to show that it and its community were law-abiding citizens. It is important to note that of the thirteen main English articles printed after the declaration of war, at least seven were originally published in another news outlet prior to being published in the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. This may be because these articles were already written and the *Scranton Wochenblatt* did not want to print similar articles and/or it provided a buffer for the *Scranton Wochenblatt* that could then point to other news outlets to blame for seditious writing. However, the former reasoning may fit best here because it appears that *Scranton Wochenblatt* printed the English articles as an afterthought since there were so few of them and they were not consistent in supporting a specific view of the German community in Scranton. It must be added that there is no pattern to the thirteen articles when they were printed after war was declared. Articles that criticised Germany coincided with articles that did the same to the Allies. This juxtaposition added to the view that printing these articles was an afterthought.

This lack of interest in printing consistent English articles accompanied by the fact that this was a German-language newspaper that was not readily read by English speakers, could have contributed to the end of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*. The known cause for the end of this newspaper like many others was with the withholding of advertisement. Friedrich A. Wagner, the editor of the *Scranton Wochenblatt*, published the final edition of this paper on August 29, 1918, under the title of “Einstellung der Herausgabe des *Scranton Wochenblatt* mit der heutigen Nummer” or “The Discontinuation of the Publication of the *Scranton Wochenblatt* with Today’s Edition.”<sup>107</sup> This article was specifically written in German but it explained why the paper was ending, stating that “the continued decline of advertising and the difficult collection of debts are the main reason [sic] for the discontinuation,” adding the hope that “justice will prevail and that all things German will be honorable again” once “the spell of discrimination” has ended.<sup>108</sup> Most of the German language newspapers in Pennsylvania had ended by the end of World War One in 1918 yet several did survive. “The *Tageblatt* [(Daily Paper)] of Philadelphia and the *Volksblatt und Freiheitsfreund* [(Peoples’ Journal and Freedom Friend)] of Pittsburgh” survived well into World War Two “because of their recognized Americanism and their more advantageous location in major urban centers.”<sup>109</sup> That is not too surprising considering that in 1910, the U.S. Census showed that of Philadelphia’s foreign-born white nationalities, 21.1 percent were of German ancestry with Pittsburgh at 30.2 percent and Scranton trailing with only 16.6 percent (or 15,047 people) of the total foreign white born populations. For Philadelphia and Scranton, Irish ancestry was the largest foreign white born minority.<sup>110</sup> Despite the large population of German ancestry in Scranton, the *Scranton Wochenblatt* only had a circulation of

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<sup>107</sup> Friedrich A. Wagner, “Einstellung der Herausgabe des *Scranton Wochenblatt* mit der heutigen Nummer,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, August 29, 1918, translated by Annika Nielsen Dowd, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053936/1918-08-29/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=08%2F1%2F1918&index=6&date2=08%2F31%2F1918&searchType=advanced&language=eng&sequence=0&lccn=sn86053936&words=&proxdistance=5&state=Pennsylvania&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=range&page=2>.

<sup>108</sup> Wagner, “Einstellung der Herausgabe des *Scranton Wochenblatt* mit der heutigen Nummer,” *Scranton Wochenblatt*, August 29, 1918.

<sup>109</sup> Waldenrath, “The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I,” 27-28 & 40.

<sup>110</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910*.

1,200 newspapers in 1918 with the most subscribers being in 1910 at 1,250.<sup>111</sup> The decline of subscribers also lent to the idea that reading German in the German community of Scranton was falling out of favor by the war's beginning.

Despite the loss of the German language newspapers like the *Scranton Wochenblatt* due to the actions of the United States government and citizens as well as the overall war, the German communities in Scranton and elsewhere survived. Like elsewhere, Scranton's German community survived not by making all their culture or identity disappear but instead "gave up controversial political and cultural battles to survive," like ending the *Scranton Wochenblatt*.<sup>112</sup> Thus, the newspaper fits with the ethnic disappearance theory due to the overall war and the pressures placed on the newspaper and its community by neighboring communities and governments. Yet, the German community in Scranton like all the others in Pennsylvania fit the ethnic survival theory. The census of 2000 shows that German ancestry was still 25 percent of the total state population in 2000 but even this self-identification was on the decline.<sup>113</sup> This was not new especially since the use of the German language in Pennsylvania was declining decades before World War One. After all, "ethnic identity is something that changes as people define and redefine themselves," which could include the loss of aspects of German culture or their rebirth in new forms.<sup>114</sup> An example of ethnic and cultural rebirth was with the German Society of Philadelphia that celebrated its 250<sup>th</sup> year in 2014. The society still provided and provides for its German community including offering "German lessons for anyone who wants to learn a few new words."<sup>115</sup> Despite the attempt of the *Scranton Wochenblatt* to support its community's culture and ideals throughout the war that heightened its decline, the community and the culture that the newspaper served still survives in Scranton and elsewhere in Pennsylvania to this day.

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<sup>111</sup> Waldenrath, "The German Language Newspress in Pennsylvania During World War I," 28.

<sup>112</sup> Weber, "Ethnic Identity during War: The Case of German American Societies during World War I," 199.

<sup>113</sup> David Slade, "Fewer Pennsylvanians claim German links; experts doubt Census; Demographers puzzle over numbers. Have so many lost an identity?" *The Morning Call (Allentown, PA)*, 2002, *ProQuest*, accessed January 31, 2018, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/393147471?accountid=28640>.

<sup>114</sup> Donner, "Neither Germans nor Englishmen, but Americans," 198.

<sup>115</sup> Franziska Holzschuh, "German Society celebrates 250 years of heritage - and sauerkraut," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 14, 2014, *Newspaper Source*, accessed February 1, 2018, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=1&sid=3d039966-b542-4185-b964-cce7f6c5aa91%40sessionmgr4006&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=2W62886084770&db=nfh>.



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