



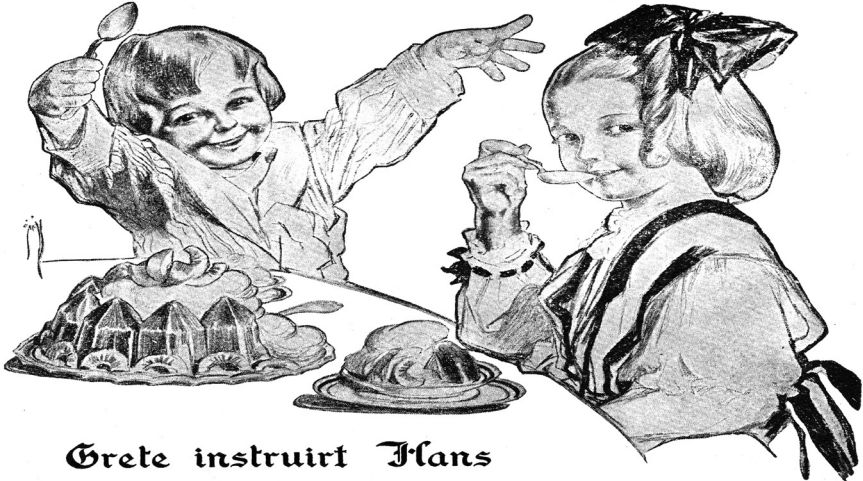
MAX KADE INSTITUTE

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

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From Rags to Archives' Riches: Advertisements and German-American Economic Integration

Randi Ramsden



Grete instruiert Hans

„Hurra!“ schreit Hans.
Eben hat ihm Grete mitgeteilt: „Hans, Mama sagt, wir müßten Jell-O essen, weil es gut für uns ist. Ich bin sehr froh darüber, Du nicht auch, denn ich würde es doch essen wollen. Die meisten Sachen, Hans, die gut für uns sind, schmecken furchtbar schlecht, aber Jell-O ist fein.“
Und natürlich antwortete Hans hierauf mit „Hurra!“
Mama und Grete haben beide Recht.

JELL-O

An ad for Jello from *Die Deutsche Hausfrau* (Milwaukee and Minneapolis, April 1910). Translation on page 5

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Nowadays, advertisements are often viewed as nuisances, but they have been and continue to be vital to print publications, allowing them to provide their readership with affordable news and information while continuing to pay their production bills. Historically, newspaper ads have also been an important resource for immigrants to navigate their new surroundings in their native language. Browsing historic German-language newspapers, we find businesses promoting

their ability to speak German on site, showing how important a business's linguistic proficiency must have been for immigrants who knew little or no English. If a newcomer was in need of medical attention, their local German-language paper could point them to a German-speaking doctor. If a family needed to be clothed, a German-speaking seamstress could be identified.

It is not always easy to spot ads in early newspapers. Many are little more than promotional one-liners in-

egrated into the local news columns, difficult to detect by the contemporary reader. It was not until printing advancements and the availability of a variety of type (fonts, font sizes, etc.) and cuts (embellishments, borders, images, etc.) that ads became more easily identifiable. Whether they are eye-catching or not, however, the advertisements printed in newspapers can help us understand more about the ways in which German immigrants integrated economically in the United States.

Local German-owned businesses advertising exclusively to a German-speaking consumer base could indicate the emergence of a parallel economy in that community. In order to assess if this was the case, however, we need to identify German- and English-language newspapers published in the same place at the same time and look for any crossover in the ad columns. Comparing an array of newspapers from across the country, it becomes apparent that German-speaking medical practitioners

Notiz für Damen.
Die medizinische Electricität wird mit außerordentlichem Erfolge bei allen weiblichen Krankheiten angewandt. Bei Bleichsucht, Hautausschlägen, bei allen Krankheiten des Mutterleibes und allen mit der monatlichen Periode verbundenen Schwierigkeiten, bei Weissen und andern Flüssen etc. etc.
Bei Consultationen wird französisch und deutsch gesprochen.
Electro-Medical Institut,
186 Laß-Strasse, 2 Thüren östlich von Wells-Strasse.
18m3Mtum **Dr. Thos. MacKinnis, Arzt.**

CARD TO THE LADIES.—All
Eruptions of the Skin, Chlorosis (green sickness) Nervous Palpitations, Pains in the Side, Indurations or Ulcers of the neck of the Womb, Falling of the Womb, Tumors of the Abdomen, Discharges and Obstructions of the Monthly period, Whites, and other discharges invariably cured by MEDICAL ELECTRICITY. **Dr. THOS. MACKINNIS' Electro-Medical Institute 186 Lake street, two doors east of Wells, Chicago. Post Office Box 567. mh15-b149-1m**

Top: Dr. MacKinnis' ad from the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 26, 1863

Bottom: His ad from the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 24, 1863

who advertised in German-language publications, for example, are usually not found also in their English-language counterparts. Advertisements for questionable medical services, oftentimes targeted at a female readership, can, however,

be found in both.

Two Illinois newspapers, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, printed ads promoting medical electricity as a cure for what oftentimes was referred to as "female suffering." The German version of the advertisement adds that French and German could be spoken at the consultation. Assuming that the physician performing the treatment, Dr. MacKinnis, was not of German descent, this 1863 advertisement suggests that non-German businesses were already attempting to tap into the German immigrant consumer base.

This can also be seen in advertisements for larger businesses printed in English and German papers. The Boston Clothing Store operated by G. G. Griswold in Saint Paul, Minnesota, for example, advertised in

Boston Kleider-Store.
G. G. Griswold,
Groß- u. Kleinbändler in
fertigen Kleidern, Hüten, Kappen
und
Herren - Kleidungsstücken,
Lamberts Brüdhaus, unter der Minnejetian Office,
Dritte Straße, St. Paul.
St. Paul, 23. Mai 1857.

Top left: Boston Clothing Store ad from the *Minnesota Deutsche Zeitung*, August 1, 1857

Bottom left: The store's ad from the *Weekly Minnesotan*, October 24, 1857

BOSTON CLOTHING STORE
G. G. GRISWOLD,
THIRD STREET, FOUR DOORS BELOW CEDAR,
At Wholesale & Retail.
A LARGE ASSORTMENT OF FALL
and Winter Goods Just received at the "BOSTON CLOTHING STORE," and for sale by
G. G. GRISWOLD.

Greetings Friends and Readers!

As the 2022–23 academic year draws to a close, I want to express my gratitude to Hans Bernet and Karen Fowdy, and also to Bobbie Bernet and other local volunteers, for making this year's annual meeting in Monroe so successful. Our attendance was back up to where it was before the pandemic and the Swiss-themed program was enlightening and entertaining. Learning more about Wisconsin's Swiss German heritage underscores the profound historical diversity of groups that fall under the rubric of "German American."

This was another successful year for MKI on every front. Our Virtual Lecture Series featured presentations on four diverse topics that showcased cutting-edge scholarship made accessible for broad audiences. We were very pleased at the large number of attendees at each of these lectures who logged in from around the world. Antje and I were also grateful to receive invitations to present to groups outside of Madison.

Two other virtual events this past year merit mention as well. This past November Antje led an all-day German genealogy workshop that was co-sponsored by MKI and the Wisconsin Historical Society and attracted 129 participants. In March, Antje and I, with Friends Board member Maria Sturm, co-led a workshop on learning to read the old German script, which was also successful.

Overall, I feel good about how we are leveraging technology, especially Zoom, to advance our Institute's mission through virtual events and also the MKI Kurrent Transcription Group led by Antje and Maria, which began in the spring of 2022. Face-to-face work remains important, of course, and all of us on the MKI staff are grateful that University operations have largely returned to normal. I am especially pleased that this spring we were able to host two student interns from Germany, Lea Garcia from the University of Hamburg and Sonja Schander, who is studying history in Mainz and whose research on Kate Everest Levi is featured in this newsletter. In the fall, MKI hosted two visiting scholars, from the University of Halle, Germany, and from Paris Nanterre University, France. This coming fall we will welcome a German linguist from the University of Verona, Italy, as a guest researcher. It is exciting to make our library and archival materials accessible not only to students and researchers from Wisconsin, but also to scholars from around the world.

I am deeply grateful to the generosity of our Friends for yet another successful matching opportunity that brought in funds to support the restoration of some of our precious books. Thanks to several Friends, we raised \$1,000 beyond the \$350 needed for the match. Also on the development front, a special word of thanks to Friends Board Member and Treasurer Bill Petig, who facilitated a sizeable contribution to our endowment from the Ruth and Frederick Dobbratz Trust. Last and certainly not least, I want to thank another Friend from whom we have continued to receive generous support for our programming through the Eau Claire Community Foundation.

In closing, on behalf of Antje, Kevin, Randi, and myself, I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to you, our Friends, for your steadfast support of our Institute's work over the past year. We literally could not do what we do without that support. *Vielen herzlichen Dank!*

With gratitude,
Mark

Board of Directors, Friends of the Max Kade Institute

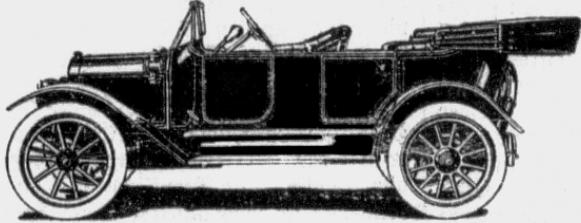
Hans Bernet *Monroe*
Calla Buttke *Wausau*
Julie Larson-Guenette *Madison*
Mark Loudon *ex officio, Sun Prairie*
Susan Marshall *Secretary, Phillips*
William Petig *Treasurer, Watertown*
Antje Petty *ex officio, Fitchburg*
John Pustejovsky *Whitefish Bay*
Karyl Rommelfanger *Manitowoc*
Dorothy Smaglick *President, Brookfield*
Maria Sturm *Wynnewood, Penn.*
Katarina Theo *Chicago, Ill.*
Pamela Tesch *Vice President, Oconomowoc*

Continued from page 2

both the *Minnesota Deutsche Zeitung* and the *Weekly Minnesotan* in 1857. There is no indication that the retail staff spoke German, but the German advertisement attested to the fact that finished dresses, hats, and men's clothing could be purchased there.

In the early 20th century, advertisements for the same automobile sold by the same showroom can be found in two Delaware papers, the *Wilmington Lokal-Anzeiger und Wilmington Freie Presse* and the *Evening Journal*. A comparison of the two advertisements reveals a number of linguistic choices made, hinting either at changes in the written German language or the possible carelessness of the marketers involved. In the German version, the promise that "A request by mail or phone will bring a demonstrator with car direct to your door" becomes "Postkarte oder Telephon Nachricht bringt Mann mit Car vor Ihre Tuer," using "ue" instead of the umlaut and borrowing the word "car" from the English language. The sales pitch in English is much more verbose, emphasizing the all-weather dependability of the vehicle, while the German ad is succinct, proclaiming that this is "a car a man needs." The same two Wilmington publications also advertised, in their respective languages, Durstein's cigars and seasonable furniture ready for purchase at Meharg's Furniture & Carpet Company.

While the majority of crossover advertising found during this cursory search are examples of English-speaking businesses advertising in



**EIN
AUTOMOBIL
was ein Mann
gebraucht.**

**MAXWELL 25. 4. 5 PASSENGER
TOURING CAR \$750.**

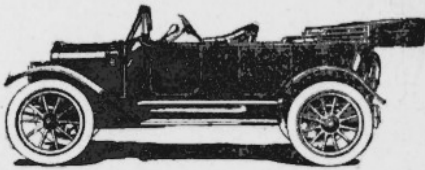
Wilmington Agentur; Garage 103-5 Orange St.
Postkarte oder Telephon Nachricht bringt Mann mit Car
vor Ihre Tuer.

D. and A. Phone 835. 5700 Auto 2835. 2625.

For Summer For Winter
It Makes No Differencee What Time of the Year
The MAXWELL "25 L4"
Can Always Be Depended Upon. This is No One
Season Car.

By no means. It is an all-around machine; one that will give you excellent service at any time of the year. It is no toy, but a car constructed of the best material used in the manufacture of automobiles, of the most practical workmanship and complete as to comfort and durability in all its details.

**The Price
f. o. b.
From
Factory
\$750**



**The Price
f. o. b.
From
Factory,
\$750**

Maxwell Touring Car 25 Model

We can prove our assertion as to the Maxwell "25" Touring car for strength and speed by the following testimonials of the officials of Mt. Rainier and the following is their statement:

"This is the first time an automobile ever made the trip in the heart of winter—December 27, 1913. The last twenty-five miles of the trip was a steady grade of from 4 to 8 per cent. Load of approximately 900 pounds, with four passengers and their baggage. The last seven miles was entirely second gear work, yet the average gasoline consumption for the 235 miles, up grade, was 18 miles to the gallon. Remarkable, when you consider the altitude, the severe weather and the unbroken trail.

No adjustments were necessary—except carburetor for altitude and cold weather.

This testimony sufficiently proves the great staying power of the Maxwell Model 25. There are other proofs for this, to which we will refer to at some future time. If you want a good, reliable and trustworthy machine, direct your eyes to MAXWELL MODEL 25, at the low price of \$750. On sale at the

**Maxwell Showrooms and Garage,
No. 103-105 Orange Street.**

A request by mail or phone will bring a demonstrator with car, direct to your door. D. & A. Phones, 835 and 5700; Automatic Phones, 2835 and 2625.

Top: *Wilmington Lokal-Anzeiger und Wilmington Freie Presse*, May 16, 1914
Bottom: *Evening Journal* (Wilmington, Del.), May 25, 1914

Continued from page 4

German, there were also instances of German immigrant businesses advertising in English. It will not come as a surprise that the German immigrant beer brewing industry was especially successful in advertising in English-language publications. In Wilmington publications, we can find ads for Stoeckle's Brewing Company and the Bavarian Brewing Company. If it was not for the names, however, English-language readers may not have even known that either brewery was owned by German immigrants.

Contemporary advertising sometimes emphasizes a product's claim to Germanness as a seal of quality. We know that taglines such as "German engineering" are meant to imply the superiority of a product when seen

Bavarian Beer

Is an economical luxury as well as highly-nutritive food. It is a good, wholesome beverage, made from imported hops and western barley malt, both of the highest grade. It cannot be duplicated for absolute purity.

Nothing today contains more strengthening and sustaining qualities. It is the beer of good cheer, adds one more pleasure to life, pleasing the palate, refreshing and resting the weary body and quieting the nerves. When run down in health or when you have that all gone feeling, try a glass of Bavarian Beer. It is a food and stimulant.

Above: *Evening Journal* July 1, 1914

Below: *Wilmington Lokal-Anzeiger* und *Wilmington Freie Presse* May 16, 1914

BAVARIAN BREWING CO.,
Brauerei an 5. und Dupont Str.,
Wilmington, Delaware.
In allen leiten den Hotels und Wirthschaften findet man das famo
BAVARIAN BIER
Dasselbe ist von allen Flaschenbier-Händler der Stadt zu beziehen
Die Bavarian Brewing Co.,

THE GREAT AMERICAN
SAFES.
 MANUFACTURED BY
DIEBOLD, BAHMANN & CO.
 THE IMMENSE SALES
TESTIFIES to the MERITS of Them.
NO BUSINESS FIRM
Can afford to be without one.
 FOR SALE BY
F. W. PRATT,
13 LaSalle Street, Chicago, Ill.
 oct3-09:7-10t:net

Above left: *Chicago Daily Tribune* October 29, 1863
 Above right: *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* March 26, 1863

in English-language advertising. This was not always the case. In the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, Diebold, Bahmann & Company advertised their iron safes as German and assured readers that the company was German owned and operated. Their ad in the English-language *Chicago Daily Tribune*, on the other hand, promoted the same products as "The Great American Safes."

In general, advertisements in historical newspapers tell many stories of successful immigration—at least by economic standards. They show a variety of ways in which German immigrants integrated into and contributed to the US economy. From services in the German language for local immigrants to larger endeavors advertised beyond the immigrant community,

IRON SAFES.
Deutsche Geldkisten-Fabrik
 —von—
Diebold Bahmann & Co. Cincinnati O.
 Wir machen die Deutschen in Chicago und Umgegend auf unsere Safes aufmerksam. Unsere Firma besteht aus 3 Deutschen, Karl Diebold, Friedrich Bahmann und Jacob Kingle, die in den größten Geldkisten der Welt gearbeitet haben. Unsere Arbeiter sind Alle Deutsche und wir haben uns durch die deutsche Arbeit in diesem Fache den größten Ruf in Amerika erworben. Wer sich überzeugen will, gehe hin zu unserem Agenten.
F. W. Pratt, No. 13 LaSalle Str. Chicago,
 wo unsere Safes zu sehen sind. 13mi Stum

German Americans made a name for themselves where they settled. Moreover, the efforts taken by non-German businesses to advertise in German indicate the significance of the immigrant community as viable consumers in the larger economic landscape.

There is great research potential in studying advertisements to learn about immigration and integration. A more thorough investigation into these historical sources could shed light on the development of immigrant businesses over time; on whether German-language marketing strategies followed or differed from those put forth in the English language; on social, cultural and economic trends over time; or lead to quantitative analyses of crossover advertisements. 

Translation of Jello ad from page 1

Grete instructs Hans

"Hooray!" screams Hans.

Grete has just told him: "Hans, Mama says we have to eat Jell-O because it's good for us. I'm very happy about it, aren't you, because I would want to eat it. Most things, Hans, that are good for us taste terribly bad, but Jell-O is fine."

And of course Hans replied with "Hurrah!"

Mama and Grete are both right.

Personal Accounts of the German American Experience: Kate Everest Levi's 1892 Questionnaire for German Immigrants

Sonja Schander

Kate Asaphine Everest Levi (1859–1938) was not only the first female to earn her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and “the first woman to receive the [Ph.D. in History] from an organized graduate school,” but she was also a pioneering historian who dedicated a large part of her career to researching the history and experiences of German immigrants in the Midwest. After earning her BA in 1882, she taught at Markham’s Academy, Milwaukee (1882–1883), La Crosse High School (1883–1884), and Lawrence University, Appleton (1884–1890). She returned to Madison to earn her MA in 1892, and her Ph.D. in 1893. Later in life she became the supervisor of the Wisconsin Historical Society’s archives (1918–1926), where her papers are preserved to this day.

Born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Levi may have grown up aware that her home state was a popular destination for German-speaking immigrants in the 19th century. Her early research focused on the demographic analysis of German communities as well as an exploration of their experiences with migration and American life and culture. She presented her findings in multiple papers, including her dissertation, of which perhaps only a section was published as “Geographical Origin of German Immigration to Wisconsin.” It is unclear whether this 52-page article constitutes her entire doctoral thesis.

To gain personal perspectives for her research, Levi mailed out questionnaires that asked her contacts about their immigration experiences and lives in America. Three variant questionnaires are found in the Wisconsin Historical Society’s archive: one with fifteen, one with seventeen, and one with twenty-two questions. The two shorter ones are written in English, the longest is in German. Unfortunately, the collection does not contain information on the number of surveys sent, to whom they were sent, or what the response rate was.

In the archive, we found only two response letters for the questionnaire with fifteen questions and three for the one with seventeen questions. However, for the 22-question survey we have ten responses. Even though the questions in this survey were written in German, many people answered in English. Of those who answered in German, about half wrote in *Kurrent*, the old German script. Some respondents wrote long letters; others wrote their answers in the margins. Levi’s questions range from short and simple to complex and in-depth, possibly mirroring her research interests. Overall, she sought to determine the exact origins of the German immigrants, their places of residence in the United States, and their reasons for moving to Wisconsin. She then asked more detailed questions about how their migration was organized, whether their financial situation in



Portrait of Kate Everest, from the 1882 University of Wisconsin–Madison Class Album

America differed from in Germany, and the ways in which her respondents adapted to American society while maintaining their distinct traditions and identities.

The questionnaires appear to have been sent out in late 1892, only a year before Levi submitted her dissertation (under her maiden name Kate Asaphine Everest). Although the surveys address issues pertinent to her thesis, Levi seems not to have incorporated them; no references to the questionnaires can be found in either the text or footnotes of her publications. One possible explanation may be that her respondents’ answers did not always address the questions. Also, the intent

Dodge Co,
Herman

ad I d I have 3 congrega-
tions. Almost 3/4 of it are
from the province of Pommern
Kingdom of Prussia. The
rest has come
from the Kingdom of Westphalia
most in townships of Hermann, Sudp.
Co. W.

1. Von welchem Theile Deutschlands (Stadt, Bürgermeisterei, Kreis, Regierungsbezirk, Provinz) sind die Mitglieder Ihrer Gemeinde?
2. Welches ist die annähernde Anzahl der Familien oder Individuen von jedem dieser Theile?
3. Wo wohnen sie hier (in townships, cities)?
4. Wann haben sich die ersten deutschen Ansiedler dort niedergelassen? *About 45 years ago.*
5. Sind sie direkt nach Wisconsin gekommen oder haben sie sich vorher erst in einem anderen Staate angesiedelt? *Most of them came direct from Germany to here.*
6. Wann hat sich die Mehrzahl derselben in diesem Staate niedergelassen? *About 40 years ago.*
7. War die Einwanderung nach Ihrem Wohnorte eine organisierte oder ein Privatunternehmen, oder wurde sie auf Anraten von Agenten der Eisenbahn-Gesellschaften oder der Staats-Einwanderungs-Behörde hervorgerufen? *Private affair.*
8. Geben Sie gefälligst genau die Gründe der Einwanderung der Leute an. Waren es politische, religiöse oder andere Ursachen; oder kamen sie hierher um ihre materielle Wohlfahrt zu verbessern? *To improve their material welfare.*
9. Was veranlasste sie, nach Wisconsin u. besonders nach Ihrem Wohnorte zu kommen? *Relatives and neighbors, who immigrated to here first induced others to follow.*

Organisiert u. wie

One person responded to Kate Everest Levi's 22-page German questionnaire with answers scribbled in English in the margins

of some of the questions may have been hard to understand. One example stands out: *Was berichtete der Untersuchungsausschuss, falls ein solcher vorher geschreitet [ausgerufen] wurde?* (If a committee of inquiry was called beforehand, what did it report?) Most skipped this question, with one stating there had been no such committee, while another admitted to not understanding the question. When asked: *Wie halten sie [die Gemeindeglieder] ihre Gebäulichkeiten in Ordnung?* (How do they [the community members] maintain their buildings?) respondents often answered with "good," showing they thought Levi wanted to know the condition of their houses.

Another question, however, was well understood and received detailed answers. Levi asked, in German, about marriages between immigrants and their American neighbors; whether they preserve their language, customs,

and beliefs or wish to be Americanized; and what effects life in America has had on them, or they have had on their American neighbors.

Here is one response to this set of questions, translated from the German:

"Americans have become fewer in this area from year to year, they could not make it among the hardworking Germans [...] The Americans exhausted the land and then left. The Germans, however, have restored the exhausted land to a good condition and made it fertile. The Germans seek the Americans' friendship but are treated [?] with contempt. Therefore, there are few marriages between Germans and Americans. The Germans [...] have their children learn English, because they realize that this is necessary and useful for their children. But they also want to maintain their mother tongue, their customs and

traditions with very few exceptions. [...] The influence of American life on the Germans is thoroughly a [bad one?]. The Germans have learned many things from the Americans that are not good and can neither help the physical welfare nor the salvation of the soul. Our Germans, of course, also give the Americans many reasons to complain."

This respondent's short report provides insight into immigrants' views of the assimilation process and the relationships they had with their neighbors. It also reflects stereotypes and prejudices that—to some degree—still exist.

Still awaiting deeper examination, Levi's surveys reveal important information about the lives and perspectives of 19th-century German Americans. Today, over 130

Continued on page 15

Welcome New Members to the Friends Board of Directors

Antje Petty

We are delighted to welcome two new members to the Friends of the Max Kade Institute's Board of Directors.

Hans Bernet lives in Monroe, Wisconsin. The son of Swiss immigrants, he grew up surrounded by Swiss German culture and speaking the Swiss German dialect of the Bernese Oberland. His parents ran a small deli in Monroe where they also sold imported Swiss goods. They were heavily involved in the local Swiss community. Hans's mother Martha sang, yodeled, and played the accordion at events around the region, and for more than 60 years she hosted the Swiss folk music radio program on WEKZ.

Hans graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison with degrees in European history and German and spent his junior year studying in Freiburg, Germany. He later taught English for two years in German high schools in Nuremberg, Germany, as well as high school German for three years in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, before moving back to Monroe and working at The Swiss Colony. During his time in Germany, Hans frequently visited relatives in Switzerland. In the years since, he has organized four tours of Switzerland from Wisconsin and has made many personal trips back to the “home-land.”

Hans is on the boards of the Swiss Turner Hall in Monroe and of the



Hans Bernet in Switzerland

Monroe Swiss Singers. He also was a member of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute Board of Directors once before, from 2012 to 2018. Hans says that joining the Board of Directors again will be another opportunity to actively pursue his interest in preserving the history of contributions made by German-speaking immigrants to the culture of America.

Katarina Theo currently lives in Chicago, Illinois, but grew up in Wisconsin. She credits her interest in German American studies to the wonderful influence of her grandfather, Don Zamzow, a former

member of the Friends Board of Directors. Zamzows descend from the large group of immigrants from the Prussian province of Pomerania who immigrated to Marathon County, Wisconsin, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Zamzows and other descendants of those early settlers founded the *Pommerscher Verein of Central Wisconsin* and for decades have worked to tell the history of Pomeranians in the region and keep their traditions and language alive.

Katarina's passion for German language and culture during her



Katarina Theo at her graduation, with her master's thesis

guage certificate as well as a master's degree in Intercultural Studies with an emphasis in Healthcare Marketing. While in graduate school, Katarina worked as a healthcare marketing intern at Samsung Electronics GmbH in Frankfurt as well as a Working Student in oncology marketing at AbbVie GmbH in Wiesbaden. These experiences provided her with hands-on, practical knowledge, especially regarding the differences in marketing strategies between the US and Germany. Katarina is currently employed as a consultant at the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest in Chicago.

With her German heritage and passion for German language and culture, Katarina hopes to bring fresh perspectives to the Board of Directors of the Friends of the MKI. She looks forward to collaborating with others on preserving German culture in America today.

Welcome on Board, Katarina and Hans! 🇩🇪

childhood grew over the course of her high school years and her undergraduate career at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. During that time, she had the opportunity to

study abroad in Marburg, Germany, immersing herself in German society and culture. After her graduation in 2019, Katarina moved to Marburg, where she earned a C2 German lan-

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies is published three times a year at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Submissions are invited and should be sent to:

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Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies
432 East Campus Mall, UW–Madison, Madison, WI 53706–1407
Phone: (608) 262–7546
mki@library.wisc.edu
mki.wisc.edu

The Many Meanings of Being German Canadian

Myka Burke

Being German Canadian: History, Memory, Generations. Edited by Alexander Freund. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2021. 288 pp. \$31.95 (Paperback)

Alexander Freund's newest edited volume, *Being German Canadian*, is part of the University of Manitoba Press Series Studies in Immigration and Culture which seeks to illuminate the "Canadian and transnational immigrant experience" while focusing on "the cultural adjustments of the migrants, including their ethnic, religious, gender, class, race, or intergenerational identities and relations." *Being German Canadian* builds on Freund's previous edited collection, *Beyond the Nation? Immigrants' Local Lives in Transnational Cultures*, which focused on diaspora, transnationalism, and transculturalism. *Being German Canadian* gathers research from scholars from various disciplines, and together, each with a different lens, they examine the evolving relationship with memory and the concept of generation in German Canadian studies. Fittingly, before tackling the main topics of the book, and in keeping with an ongoing and deepening understanding of the harm experienced by Indigenous people in the name of Canada, the authors provide a statement acknowledging that generations of Europeans, including Germans, benefitted from "programs of dispossessing and assimilating

Indigenous Peoples." The authors also declare that newcomers must accept "a new history and with it a responsibility to learn about colonial history and its ongoing legacy."

Being German Canadian is comprised of an introduction, eight well-researched chapters, and a thought-provoking afterword by Roger Frie. Photographs add a layer of visual information to many of the essays. The authors employ various methodologies and sources, including oral history interviews, archival research, and analysis of personal narratives and biographies. Through the lens of memory and generation, the contributors offer a nuanced understanding of how historical events and sociocultural contexts have influenced the identity and collective memory of German Canadians.

In the first chapter, "A Flying Piano and Then-Silence," Alexander Freund explores the experiences of German Canadians during the First World War. He uses oral history interviews conducted in the 1970s to shed light on the discrimination and internment faced by German Canadians during the war. Freund argues that German Canadians struggled to adopt the dominant narrative of the war as a turning point for the nation. The chapter highlights the challenges faced by German Canadians in feeling a sense of belonging in Canadian society.

In the second chapter, "One Führer, Two Kings," Robert Teigrob critically examines Prime Minister Mackenzie



King's 1938 visit to Nazi Germany and the issue of fascist apologetics. He highlights how previous scholarship has evaded or reframed Mackenzie King's visit and argues that this "sanitization" needs to be critically appraised. Teigrob explores the role of willful forgetting and how it helped to promote certain mythologies, such as the positive recollection of the Second World War, while excluding marginalized groups. The chapter emphasizes the challenges faced by German-speaking populations in proving their loyalty to Canada during the war.

Chapter 3, "A Transnational Yek-kish Identity?" is written by Patrick Farges. He examines the global diaspora of German-speaking migrants and focuses on German-speaking

Jews who fled Germany and Austria during the rise of antisemitism and fascism in the 1930s. He explores how these migrants reconstructed their identities and collective memory within a postwar Jewish diaspora. The chapter highlights the challenges faced by German-speaking Jews in Canada and Mandatory Palestine/Israel and the problems of Jewish acculturation.

In chapter 4, “The Roots of Ethnic Fundamentalism in German-Canadian Studies,” Karen Brglez describes the personal history of Gottlieb Leibbrandt, a prominent figure in German Canadian studies, and his support for the Nazi cause during the Third Reich. She argues that individuals like Leibbrandt recreated their national identities in their new socio-political surroundings. The chapter highlights how Leibbrandt focused on German Canadian historiography to promote ethnic preservation and the privileged place of German Canadians in multicultural Canada.

The fifth chapter, “Gatekeeping in the Lutheran Church: Ethnicity, Generation, and Religion in 1960s Toronto” by Elliot Worsfold, examines the Canada Synod’s 1966 internship program and the clash between young German Canadian Lutheran students and immigrant pastors. Worsfold explores the role of generational identity and shared migration experiences in shaping the pastors’ opposition to assimilation. The chapter highlights how Lutheran parishes became sites of ethnic maintenance, allowing German-speaking immigrants to retain their ethnocultural identities.

Anke Patzelt focuses on “Migration Trajectories and the Construction

of Generational Discourses among Contemporary German Immigrants in Ottawa in the 2000s” in the sixth chapter. Patzelt explores how recent German immigrants construct their identities in relation to the postwar generation, highlighting the differentiation between “suitcase Germans” who sought economic opportunities and “container Germans” who benefited from technological advancements. The chapter emphasizes the internal self-construction of generational understanding among recent German immigrants.

In chapter 7, “We Never Really Talked About It,” Sara Frankenger explores intergenerational memory and the struggles faced by second- and third-generation German Canadians in addressing the Holocaust. She examines how the traumatic events of the Holocaust were transmitted through family narratives and explores the challenges of incorporating this history into personal and collective identities. The chapter highlights the complexities and emotional burdens associated with intergenerational memory and the ongoing impact of the Holocaust on German Canadian families.

The final chapter, “Remembering German Women Immigrants: A Public Memorialization Project in Waterloo Region,” by Kiera L. Mitchell, investigates a public memorialization project commemorating German women immigrants. Mitchell explores how descendants of these women mobilized to reclaim their family histories and create a public space for remembrance. She discusses the changing meanings and representations of German Canadian identity over time and emphasizes

the importance of recognizing the contributions of women immigrants to the German Canadian narrative.

In summary, the book delves into the weight of collective memories carried by 20th-century German-speaking migrants to Canada and the intergenerational transmission of stories and memories. It addresses the challenges of grappling with troubling national histories, family narratives of complicity and victimization, and the complexities of intergenerational dialogue surrounding historical events like war, genocide, exile, and displacement.

Being German Canadian examines both domestic spheres and public platforms such as the workplace and ethnic associations. It explores the role of oral history, including the use of existing oral history collections. The book offers a wide-ranging and thought-provoking exploration of the German Canadian experience, serving as a valuable resource for scholars and researchers interested in immigration, ethnicity, memory studies, Canadian history, and German Canadian history. It contributes to the ongoing dialogue on ethnocultural identity and the complexities of intergenerational memory, enriching our understanding of the diverse experiences of immigrant communities in Canada. 📖

Myka Burke, an officer at the German Embassy in Ottawa, specializes in cultural communication. She studied at Carleton University and the University of Vienna, and is currently completing her Ph.D. at the University of Leipzig’s Herder Institute, researching German Canadian literature.

A Swiss German Annual Meeting in Monroe, Wisconsin

Antje Petty



Hans Bernet, Karen Fowdy, and Kay Gruling

On May 6, 2023, the Friends of the MKI held their annual meeting in Monroe, Wisconsin, in the center of Swiss German American culture in Wisconsin. The day's events were superbly organized by Monroe residents and former members of the Friends Board of Directors Karen Fowdy and Hans Bernet, with significant assistance from Bobbie Bernet and many others affiliated with Monroe Turner Hall and the Monroe Swiss Singers.

First on the agenda was the Friends' annual business meeting, held in the Rathskeller restaurant at Turner Hall, which was rebuilt in a Swiss chalet style after the original structure burned down in 1936. The Rathskeller is filled with displays



Sonja Schander and Bobbie Bernet at the welcome table



Deborah Krauss Smith singing and playing the *Langnauerli*

of Monroe's Swiss German history, heritage, and traditions. Before the meeting started, our Friends were sent on a *Schnitzeljagd* (scavenger hunt). Around the room, in display cases and on the walls, they searched for answers to questions such as "What equipment is required to engage in Swiss wrestling?" and "Which famous American (before he became President) spoke at Turner Hall?" Later, three winners were drawn from the entries to receive bags of Swiss chocolate.

All of us at the MKI were delighted to see so many Friends at the business meeting, and to be able to tell them about the many activities at the Institute. The membership elected four members to the Board of Directors: John Pustejovsky and Pamela Tesch were elected to a second term, while Hans Bernet and Katarina

Theo were elected to a first term. For more information on Katarina and Hans, see pages 8–9. Later the new Board elected the following officers and members of the executive committee: Dorothy Smaglick (President), Pamela Tesch (Vice President), William Petig (Treasurer), Susan Marshall (Secretary), and John Pustejovsky (member at large).

The meeting was followed by a delicious buffet of Swiss delicacies: *Hasli Filet* (pork tenderloin in a wine, cream, and cheese sauce), *Kalberwurst* (veal sausage with onions in a brown sauce), *Rösti* (Swiss hash browns), *Spätzle* with cheese, Swiss green beans, and a salad. Afterward we were treated to a very special dessert: Swiss chocolate and *Bratzelis* (thin wafer butter cookies) made by Bobbie and Hans.

During dessert, we enjoyed a



Musicians playing Swiss music at Turner Hall in Monroe

wonderful, informative, and very entertaining program. Deborah Krauss Smith told us about the history of Turner Hall and treated us to a beautiful performance of a folksong on the *Langnauerli*, a small handheld button accordion that originated in the town of Langnau, Canton Bern. From Greg Long we learned about the Swiss Center of North America, located in New Glarus, that “is dedicated to connecting, archiving, showcasing, educating, promoting, and celebrating all that is Swiss in North America.” The Center has a growing collection of hundreds of artifacts and thousands of books, family papers and other archival items.

Greg then grabbed his bass and joined Heinz Mattmann (accordion and alphorn) and George Albright (alphorn and *Büchel*—a shorter, curved alphorn). Together they played for us some wonderful, lively Swiss and Swiss American folk music. Few of our Friends had heard these instruments played live before, and it was a very special experience.

The program was rounded out with a presentation by Karen and Hans about the founding of New Glarus, the first Swiss settlement in Green County, and how Swiss traditions have been kept alive in the region to this day. Focusing on personal experiences, they juxtaposed the 1845 diary of one of the pioneering settlers, Niklaus Dürst, with the lives and community activities of twentieth-century arrivals. Foremost among the latter were Hans’s parents, Martha and Werner Bernet, who came to Monroe in 1947 and immersed themselves in the local Swiss community, with Martha singing, yodeling, and playing the accordion at many local events

and serving as on-air announcer on the local Swiss folk music program for sixty years.

After the program at Turner Hall, the Friends visited the National Historic Cheesemaking Center Museum and the Historic Green County Courthouse. Volunteers at the museum, including several skilled cheesemakers, guided us through the fascinating history of cheesemaking and patiently answered our questions. The courthouse, an imposing structure on the town square, was undergoing a major renovation. In the main chambers, docent Noreen Rueckert shared the history of the courthouse with us, while building supervisor Dick Marty told us about the current renovation and

the unique challenges of restoring a historic building.

Many of our Friends concluded the day by gathering at Baumgartner’s Tavern for a beer and a cheese sandwich. Some were even brave enough to order the store’s signature limburger.

Thank you, Karen and Hans, for organizing such a wonderful and memorable day for the Friends! Many of us will be back. Friends who were not able to join us at the annual meeting are encouraged to make Green County a destination on their next Wisconsin road trip. 🇺🇸



MKI Friends learning about the history and restoration of the Green County Courthouse in Monroe

Continued from page 7

years after they were distributed, the questionnaires give valuable first-hand accounts about the German experience in Wisconsin. They offer views on assimilation, connections to the homeland, culture and traditions, as well as German American perceptions of American society.

The surveys also will be of interest to linguists who research heritage languages, language contact, and acculturation. Many of the English answers show signs of the writers' native German, while English features are noticeable in responses written in German. Although it likely was not what Levi intended to explore, the questionnaires shed light onto contemporary attitudes toward academic research and female scholars in particular. Some of Levi's contacts claimed she had *wenig Erfahrung mit Landleben* (little experience with farm life), deemed her approach "questionable," and doubted that *eine wirklich gute Geschichte der deutschen Einwanderung* (a truly good history of German immigration) could be derived from the surveys. Some of her respondents did not even disguise the fact that they had little faith in her level of professionalism or in her methods.

Kate Everest Levi was a ground-breaker in the history of women in higher education as well as the field of German American studies. Her scholarly work, published or not, continues to be a treasure trove and essential resource for anybody who wants to learn more about 19th-century German immigration to the Midwest, especially Wisconsin. 

NOTES

¹ Hesseltine, William B., and Louis Kaplan. "Women Doctors of Philosophy of History," *Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 14, no. 5, 1943, p. 254. www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00221546.1943.11777762. Accessed April 21, 2023.

² Everest Levi, Kate. „Geographical Origin of German Immigration to Wisconsin.“ *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, vol. 14, 1898, pp. 341–393. content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/whc/id/6515. Accessed April 26, 2023.

³ There are many more letters with similar content addressed to Levi in the Wisconsin Historical Society's archive. The numbers given here refer only to the documents that can clearly be assigned to the questionnaires.

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