Divided Loyalties: Cultural Conflicts in the Nation & Detroit in America's WW1 Era

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Abstract: The article presents the responses to the First World War in Detroit, a booming multicultural community at the time. Drawing on a variety of sources, including previously unpublished archival material, the author describes the various conflicted ethnic and social groups reluctantly entering the war. The article demonstrates how difficult it was to achieve and maintain social cohesion in a country that still was not directly related to the war.

Keywords: First World War, Detroit, melting pot, identity

Caught Short

America's World War One was a swift, nineteen-month interplay of actions, ideas, and emotions. It came as a shock to national and local systems. Quick as a train plunged into a tunnel. The war. Americans had no right to be surprised, but they were. For among all the great powers that fought in World War One, America was the most naïve and unprepared about what to do and how to do it. People and institutions had to react and improvise swiftly. Could they—did they—do a good job of it or not? Could they live up to Mark Twain's brag about Americans of a short generation before, voiced by his hero Hank Morgan in *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* (Twain 1989, 8):

> I could make anything a body wanted—anything in the world, it didn't make any difference what; and if there wasn't any quick, new-fangled way to make a thing, I could invent one—and do it as easy as rolling off a log.

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Before America plunged into the war, consensus reigned in the USA that it was Europe's problem, not theirs. As with Hank Morgan and his clattering cluster of cacophonous knights in *A Connecticut Yankee*, the First World War was seen as Europe's very own mess, inconceivable in American terms. America stayed out of it a lot longer than it went in. Thus the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, *Gazette* framed this Old World debacle for its Midwestern readers in the summer of 1914 with the headlines: "Blood-mad monarchs prepare dread sacrifice. Fifteen millions facing death. Royalty forces wreck and ruin on fated lands. Stubborn rulers play subjects as pawns" (Lord 1965, 315).

When the European war ended in 1917, consensus hadn't changed that much. US federal government and most Americans—except for Wilsonian idealists and a "lost generation"—turned their back on Europe, convinced after the slaughter of the Western Front that "Europe was an unregenerate decayed culture that threatened to suck the United States into a vortex of murderous chaos" (Green 1993, 142). We've seen something like this in our own lifetime. One wonders if there's an American pattern here? In a period of national peace and prosperity the United States suddenly goes to war against distant foreigners, for whom the nation has little or no direct experience of the enemy's home territory or culture. What's known best is America's domestic, home-based conflicts. These are the issues most worried about, known, feared and experienced. While the nation sends off a freshly organized military to fight in distant lands.

When the USA actually declared war against the Central Powers, the US navy alone was ready. In many ways the domestic war to marshal public opinion in favor of the effort was the fight the Wilson administration fought first and succeeded at almost too well. Conflicting issues of personal nationality for immigrants, aliens and ethnic residents, for Americans in the making or American citizens with pronounced ethnic identities were crucial targets and tools to accomplish the end of mustering the population which the state institutions demanded.

Reluctance

There's the pebble in the shoe, the thorn in the flesh, the *nation*. America is not a unified nation except in times of war. If the United States didn't have a remarkably flexible federalism, it'd hardly hold together. The Union Forever?

Only six percent of the Union's troops in the Civil War (1861–1865) came willingly from the draft (Kennedy 2004, 151). At the beginning of the 20th century, the United States still greatly and commonly grieved its own Civil War, which was then as close in time and feelings as the US–Vietnam War is today. Back then every Memorial Day, May 30th, also known as Decoration Day, the nation honored the memory of those fallen in the Civil War. Notable figures in President Wilson's administration were isolationists or pacifists, such as the "The Great Commoner" William Jennings Bryant, who served as Wilson's Secretary of States from 1913 to 1915, but resigned in protest against the administration's war footing.

In December of 1915, Detroit's own Henry Ford—traumatized as a child by family who had died in the Civil War—lead an eclectic delegation of hundreds of important figures in the US pacifist movement to Europe to try and stop the Great War. On his way, Henry Ford proclaimed at a peace rally in Washington, D.C., it'd be "out of the trenches Christmas, never to go back" (Gilderman 1981, 105). Henry Ford was sure this would happen. Why? Because, as he later told a rookie Brooklyn *Eagle* reporter soon before taking ship on his peace crusade, "I consider this expedition a people's affair" (Gilderman 1981, 118). He wasn't worried. He had "faith in the people. I have absolute confidence in the better side of human nature. People never disappoint you if you trust them." Well, his populist peace ruse didn't work. He was disappointed. Along with an estimated four thousand US conscientious objectors who resisted American military mobilization when it finally came; most of who belonged to Protestant denominations, many of who were German-Americans (Brock and Young 1990, 17–70).

How could the greatest immigrant nation then on earth force its immigrants to fight against their original homelands or take arms by the side of centuries-old foes? This, after all, was America "the Great Mediator" in President Wilson's own words. The nation of "never again" after it fought "The Brothers' War" to save the Union. And specially not the Great Melting Pot, the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, / The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. / Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me..." America. The nation's institutions would eventually accomplish this end by offering dual identity to those committed to America. Not demanding melting pot merger. America's World War One was terribly terse. Unification, nationalism, nativism, nation building, Americanizing and mass mobilization hit fast and strong in a country undergoing

the turmoil of vast numbers of new settlers fresh off the boat, who hadn't yet acclimatized to this New World or been fully accepted as properly belonging. A single national identity was fading away for most of them, but a new national identity had yet to be established. War offered the opportunity of a sharp, deep binding force.

One can see this stated clearly at the beginning of King Vidor's movie *The Big Parade* (1925). A gigantic lunk of an immigrant Swede "Slim Jenssen… just one of labor's millions, building a nation" is laboring hard with muscle and sweat when he hears the call. Jennsen enlists and merges in the "Berlin or Bust" war parade. Soon after, the thin, refined, well-off and waspy James Apperson runs into the enlistment parade from his father's mansion up on the hill. They're joined by "Bull" the Irish bartender and together fight as three all-American musketeers. They fight the war united as three of a different kind, bound in their newly acquired skills at arms and warring for one nation (*The Big Parade* 1925). To the death. *The Big Parade* remains a bittersweet vision—and the biggest grossing of all silent films. It struck a deep, true chord for Americans (Halliwell 1996, 115).

Their enthusiasm was true to fact. Reluctance was overcome. Volunteerism for USA's First World War participation was higher and more successful than anyone expected (remembering and afraid of what had happened during the Civil War and its draft riots.) In WW1 more than a whooping 50 percent of US troops were draftees (Kennedy 2004, 151). The civic and military system worked a process of *privatization* in a time of identity drift and wobbly commitment. The interests of the nation, the tribe, became the deep personal concerns and psychological property of the individual tribal member. Most individual citizens and soldiers grew concerned that "his destiny, his truth, and his legitimacy are linked to political activity—even more, that he can fulfill himself only in and through the State" (Ellul 1973, 190). Were they victims or active agents? Probably some of both.

Swamped

What specially complicated matters in the USA's World War era was the presumptuous cultural diversity of the un-United States along with the relative ignorance and intolerance among Americans of the country's resident national and ethnic groups. An enormous number of new immigrants had been

swallowed which the country was still in the awkward process of digesting. "Herein lies the tragedy of the age," wrote DuBois in 1903, "not that men are poor—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked—who is good? Not that men are ignorant—what is truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men" (DuBois 1903).

Thus this story has been told before and it will be told again, but one needs to recall at the outset how, in the decades before the First World War, America experienced an unprecedented influx of immigrants from the previously unharvested areas of Southern, Central and Eastern Europe. From Russian Poland, the lands of Austria and Turkey, Hungary and Bulgaria, the vast and expanding empire of *Deutsches Kaiserreich* Germany and the western edge of Russia known as the Pale of Settlement filled with Jewish residents—an unparalleled wave of diverse people, of families young and old arrived. With minimal restrictions on the intake of immigrants compared to what would later develop in the United States.

The big picture is of a nation overwhelmed by the single largest immigrant wave ever recorded up until then in US history. How an estimated 23 million immigrants came to America from previously unusual sources in the years around WW1 (Jones 1992, 179). It's been calibrated that by 1910 15% of the US population of 91,972,266 were immigrants. In the years that immediately framed WW1, 1900-1920 the USA admitted over 14.5 million immigrants ("US Citizenship and Immigration Services" 2018). This phenomenon accumulated to such an extent that by 1914 one third of the US population was foreign born or had at least one parent who was born outside of America ("Historical Census Statistics" 2018).

Over a period before, during and after US participation in WW1 combat, from April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, America and Americans had to deal with this almost unmanageable pressures in its daily life and institutions—a new unwieldy presence which many feared would fragment America along ethnic lines. Where were the ties that bind? Was America cursed by growing pressures that pulled it apart? When cultural, ethnic, racial tensions came into play, some towns and institutions exploded with conflicting loyalties and xenophobia, some didn't. When D. W. Griffith's racist and inflammatory *The Birth of a Nation* opened in Detroit in early 1916—a groundbreaking masterpiece of narrative film which nevertheless portrayed the American "Negro as stupid, shiftless, and single-mindedly determined to slake his lust with white women" and, by the way, did a "great public relations job…

for the Klan and the lynching industry" (Vanderhaeghe 2005, 162)—the civic authorities were worried that riots would break out or the theater blown up.

A squadron of police was posted in and around Detroit's Opera House movie theater where *Birth of a Nation* was shown. But there was no commotion. "Not even a hiss was raised as the crowd marched out of the theater." Among the audience were a few representatives of the city's African American population, "members of the Negro clergy, Negro preachers." The film may have ate at their guts like lime, but when interviewed they "protested that the scenes in the motion picture showing the reconstruction period in the south were prejudicial to their race" (Chalmers 1968, 194–197, 308–310).

For the most part in this period of American history, stern complaint or open debate was the best a member of an oppressed or stigmatized social group could hope for when minorities when offended. Identity was defined by difference. You belonged to a group; you had a place. These were Gentleman's Agreement times. Clergy and preacher were middle class blacks who represented their community to Detroit's middle order community at large. Fixed racial and class differences were the standard order of the day; nationality was defined racially and race was conceived hierarchically. Thus before and during the war Detroit balanced its mosaic of immigrants and aliens, minority groups and outsiders (Detroit Free Press 1916, 9).

Readers of the Problem

Among US politicians, historians and social scientists there exists three outstanding readings of the US immigrant experience, assimilation and identity at the time of World War One (and, by implication, since then). First, the firm, common, contemporary opinion of the early twentieth century era itself that there's no such thing as a hyphenated-American, only an American. What's to be integrated that's different? The newcomers were either *in* like us, or *out* like them. One cannot serve two masters. As Theodore Roosevelt declared in 1915:

> There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americans. When I refer to hyphenated Americans I do not refer to naturalized Americans. Some of the very best Americans that I have known were naturalized Americans, American born abroad.

> But a hyphenated American is not an American at all. This is just as true of the man who puts German, Irish, English or French before the hyphen. Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States ("Roosevelt Urges Aliens Be Forced Into Citizenship." *Detroit Free Press* 1915, 7).

Second, with time—and with the accumulated events of FDR's New Deal cultural pluralism (with theoretical groundwork laid by Horace Kallen); the contributions of minorities in the Second World War; the "Big One's" aftermath creation of the universal GI Bill of Rights; and specially with the combined, heated, three-fold wallop of civil rights denial, the integration achievements in the US 1960s era, along with the ongoing force of identity politics in the Carter administration and beyond—the First World war was interpreted for American immigrants as an era of "forced assimilation, ruthless xenophobia, and harsh Americanism" (Ford 2001, 11; Higham 1969; Kennedy 1989, 67). Ethnic Americans had the USA shoved down their throats until they stood up and excruciatingly produced the *foie gras* of proud, all-American nationalism.

Third, by the 1990s the readings of this issue became more nuanced. Fresh interpretations argued that immigrants "straddled the line between their ethnic community and the outside world"; were groups who both preserved certain old-world values native to their original, particular culture and managed to find a place on their own terms within the new world culture of the United States. Immigrants synthesized cultural differences, blended their divided loyalties. As the saying went among German-Americans in the early 20th century: "*Germania meine Mutter, Columbia meine Braut*" (Conzen et al. 1992; Greene 1987; Higham 1978; Ford 2001, 12).

Detroit

Enter Detroit into this mesh of issues. And why Detroit? Because the "city of the straits" is an embarrassment of riches, a relatively unmined source for questions of US social conflict and immigrant assimilation, nation building and cultural institutions, civic pride and leadership, ethnic identity, business progress and productivity in the first half of the American 20th century.

Detroit, Michigan, then captured and "encapsulated all the tensions and conflicts of industrial America" (Doody 2012, 5). By mid-20th century it embodied the spectacular gains of American labor and the full force of "American manufacturing prowess at a time when the U.S. led the world in industrial production" (Doody 2012, 5). It was mighty before its fall. And Detroit was equally remarkable for how its population and civic leaders confronted its problems head on. (Possibly too much so.) Thus, how the people of Detroit tried to meet its demographic challenges and strived for a solution is particularly relevant.

Consider its status *then*. From 1900–1950 Detroit ranked as America's fourth largest city (like Houston in 2017; while Detroit now ranks 21st). At the same time, it was then the USA's second largest immigrant destination and population; second only after New York City, and larger in immigrant numbers than Detroit's traditional rival the "windy city" of Chicago. When the Detroit Board of Commerce advertised for employment among the cities "foreign born" in December 1914, over one thousand three hundred candidates appeared the next day—speaking twenty-three different languages—ready to go to work ("Alien Job Hunters." *Detroit Free Press* 1914, 8). As the Detroit Free Press noted in May 1916: "In 1910 33 per cent of the population of Detroit was foreign-born, while 74 per cent was either foreign born or of alien parentage. Since then the approximate increase in the city's population has been 300,000, a large part of which includes aliens of little or no schooling" ("Trains Teachers." *Detroit Free Press* 1916, 13). Which made Detroit about triple the national average.

As Glazier and Helweg note in *Ethnicity in Michigan* (2001), World War One and the 1920s irritated underlying social tensions, yet brought new promises too for Michiganders (Glazier and Helweg 2001, 33). The war pressured foreigners, especially those from the nations of the Central Powers, to diminish their ethnic and cultural qualities. The Americanization movement of the time was a powerful and aggressive integrating force. Yet here in Detroit was shelter from the storm that raged in Europe. A way had to be found.

"Americanizing" Detroit

WW1 "Americanism" in Detroit stressed self-interest and allowed for some cultural leeway. Foreign-language newspapers and ethnic clubs associated with the Central Powers contracted in Detroit, but were not erased. Those

affiliated with the Allied Powers flourished. Popular news of the day in Detroit delved into the issue of why ethnic, cultural diversity should be desired or even exist in a context of American nationalism. Can there be commonality in diversity? Minorities that were relatively unheard of or invisible were seen and heard because of the war and the Progressive Era activity alive and well in Detroit.

A newspaper story from February 1914 highlights how a Detroit policeman was dismissed for cheating aliens. Detroit police patrolman Hubert A. Hart targeted newly arrived Rumanian families. Hart told the Rumanians he was an inspector from the city board of health and assessed each family for a two-dollar fee. Then threatened that if the Rumanians didn't pay quickly, they'd be dragged into court and have to pay ten dollars each. The Rumanians were defended in court by one Miss Hedwig Weiss of the housing reform committee of the city's Twentieth Century Club. Hart was convicted and stripped of his badge. His prosecution was secured by the fact that he gave the Rumanian families hand-written receipts, on the front of which were his name and designated patrol beats ("Policeman Guilty of Extortion." *Detroit Free Press* April 4, 1914, 5).

There are numerous cases like this in Detroit at the time, as well as Chicago, New York City, Cleveland, Memphis, Los Angeles and elsewhere in the Progressive Era. The law did not always look the other way when a non-American was wronged. Not like before. But the law needed the assistance of an independent benevolent association that would defend the immigrant, here be it the Twentieth Century Club. And a competent, intelligent, insider-outsider defending attorney, the remarkable Miss Hedwig Weiss, and the good luck of a dumb cop.

Or take the example of wandering through Detroit's ethnic enclaves, a full-page, illustrated feature presented to Detroiters in January 1915: "How Detroit Foreigners Get Their War News" ("How Detroit Foreigners." *Detroit Free Press* January 10, 1915, 4). For Detroit's foreign enclaves the war was a pertinent, intimate concern. As they gathered in their ethnic clubs of an evening to hear the news, they were *here*, in America, and *there*—in Italy, Greece, the Balkans, Germany, Austria-Hungary—at the same time. It's instructive. For whatever the bored or weary "attitude of the rest of the city, there is no indication of apathy in the foreign districts with which Detroit is so plentifully supplied." Their news came to them from both non-English language and English-language newspapers. Detroit's papers were considered especially valuable

since they were not censored. Read to the assembled gathering "far up on Russell street" to "Yetza and Uwan", "out in old Delray" to "Anton and Istwan", or down on "Franklin street" to "Gavril, Eirsto, Lyuba and Sigmund"—read by a native from the Old World would who'd first read in English, then translate to the assembled group. Men shouting in comment, protest, or emitting a "wail that if heard in the darkness would have been blood curdling."

What was created here for those who read and heard this article, and many other essays and articles like it at the time, was a give and take sense of Americanization. As an authoritative commentator noted later on in 1917, one needed skill, judgment and sympathy for the other person, other culture, before they, in turn, would be considerate with you. "Tact is the keynote of… Americanization work"; for "to get in touch with the alien population we must get their point of view before we try to make them 'get outs'." That is—to get out and support American efforts ("How to Convert." *Detroit Free Press* June 12, 1917, 6). The Americanization process was not integration by virtue of total removal of original, Old World identity.

Detroit's Hope

The war went through three stages of official, domestic restrictions, the legal system that bracketed everyone: the rules stipulated in Woodrow Wilson's April 6, 1917, Declaration of War ("Wilson Warns." *Detroit Free Press* April 7, 1917, 1); the Espionage Act installed on June 15, 1917; and the Sedition Act made law on May 16, 1918. They applied to everyone residing in America, but specially that wide range from the immigrant who had recently acquired citizenship or applied for papers on through the resident alien from a nation with whom the United States was at war—aka an "undesirable alien," a phrase also used at the time for insects like moths or ants (*Detroit Free Press* March 23, April 28, 1914).

Public hysteria and public vigilante actions were muted in Detroit in the WW1 years compared to the rest of the nation. Immigrant and alien needed to fit into a homogenous US legal structure and identity provided by schools, government, community, customs and laws. This did not exclude the participation of the immigrants' own ethnic clubs, language, religion, business and philanthropic organizations. More than any other nationality, the Germans in America were watched and controlled the most aggressively.

There was a lot of diversity around to deal with. By the time the US mix of races and religions got to Europe fitted snugly into their doughboy khaki uniforms—"these young, fresh, hustling, keen Americans, building up numerous works of all kinds"—noted a British war journalist—in order to deal with this rambunctious hodge podge of energy and cultures the "postal censors who read the letters of the American expeditionary force are required to know forty-seven languages" (Jerrold 1918, 416–417).

Detroit itself had some of everything in terms of languages and cultures. In greater Detroit by 1900 the dominant, largest foreign-born group were the Poles (66,113), followed by the Italians (21,711), the Russian-born (11,162), the Hungarian-born (9,014), the Yugoslavian-born (7,576), the Romanian-born (6,385), and the Greek-born (6,385). Along with significant groups of Finns and Middle Eastern cultures (Glazier and Helweg 2001, 32; "Detroit's Recovery" 2017, 35–36). This happened all amid a rapidly growing urban population that reached just short of a million by 1920, with, as noted, about 75 percent of the city's residents either foreign born or the children of immigrants ("Trains Teachers." *Detroit Free Press* May 26, 1916, 13; Doody 2012, 9).

Detroit at heart was an unpretentious, blue-collar, workers' town, like Pittsburg, Pa., or Cleveland, Ohio. It was a place of muscle, ingenuity and guts. This was a place where the *Iliad* met Henry Ford. Plus Detroit had been a dramatic example of the boom and bust American city, a lesson to be learned. Here was the nation's common hope in the first half of the twentieth century. This wasn't New York City calling to power, fame and Wall Street. Not Boston's elitist appeal of old Brahmin culture or Los Angeles' siren song of Hollywood and transcendent sex appeal. Detroit as Detroit has been an American urban and workers dream aspiration—get a good job, buy a house, settle down and have a family in a good neighborhood—that almost worked. One still sees strong echoes of this hope in films like Clint Eastwood's *Gran Torino* (2008) or *Flash of Genius* (2008). This is hard to imagine now when one thinks of the burnt-out husk that Detroit became by the 1970s, how it's the largest American city ever to have entered into bankruptcy—yet in many ways this vision of Detroit as it once was and could have been, a mirage shimmering in the desert, lingers.

In Brad Leithauser's docu-drama novel *The Art Student's War* (2009) about home front World War Two, the reader witnesses a city native contemplating Detroit in a Great Gatsby green-light-at-the-end-of-Daisy's-dock moment. He's driving on the city's edge when "perhaps it was only his imagination,

but [he] thought he saw a glow to the northwest", which carried him away to think and feel that here was "pure glory… breakthrough without precedent." He's proud of how the city "was bearing the burden of a dream born perhaps in ancient Greece: the governed shall govern," and of how the "authentic center" of what's best among mankind lay "not in London, or even in Washington, but here in the Midwest, in Michigan, in Detroit"— where "the French and the Dutch, the Poles and the Czechs, the Chinese and the Burmese, would be redeemed… Detroit as the world's true harbor" (Leithauser 2009, 267).

Some historians have made ironside judgments that affirm the WW1 era's Stateside treatment of immigrants and non-Americans in Detroit and elsewhere was almost as bad as the suffering of the Jews under Hitler's regime (Zinn 1980, 350–367). Treatment of ethnic minorities in the USA during WW1 wartime was inconsistent, but it wasn't a concentration camp, final solution phenomenon. People panicked. Some Americans were overzealous about "Americanizing" immigrants. And there was suffering. But the end result for the nation was far more positive than negative. The keel of a common good held steady. America and Detroit weathered the storm. (The aftermath of the 1920's "Age of Normalization" is another matter.) Striking too is what was absent. During World War 1 mob-related domestic disturbances targeted racial groups in East St. Louis, Illinois, Camp Logan, Houston, Texas, and elsewhere in America. But no major disturbances of this kind in Detroit. European immigrants did not foment this kind of violence. When it came, it was after the war and due to tensions between white and black Southerners recently arrived who competed for work and housing. Why was the hope there in Detroit? How did it work out?

Vox Populi

America's two fundamental strains of populism contended in Detroit probably more intensely than in any other US city of the time. The pressures of grassroots' expressions and popular will were certainly at work in World War One. This exertion of force was harnessed in business and factory response to teamwork and the efforts of philanthropic ethnic organizations such as the Jewish Welfare association, the Catholic Knights of Columbus, and the mainly

protestant Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Salvation Army. But populism could also run amuck, taking the form of vigilantism, sabotage. (Later, in the 1920s, amuck even more so with the KKK and the Black Legion).

Populism is a supple force, cuts both ways, is ideologically adjustable. Populism can be politically left, right or mainstream. In the case of the USA or elsewhere it's fallacious to make the common claim that populism only begins in the US 1890s with the Midwestern farmers Populist Party. *Vox populi* is an essential force in Western civilization. It was there both in 1599 when Anthony spoke to the crowd of groundlings and commoners in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and there when Marcus Antonius played up to Rome after Caesar's death in 44 B.C. One doesn't have to be literal minded about populism. It's big, strong and long-lived. As Susan Sontag wrote about culture and society in 1964 (when much was coming to light that hadn't been recognized before): "Many things in the world have not been named; and many things, even if they have been named, have never been described" (Sontag 1982, 105).

The American difference in populism arises not from a unique list of traits but from a unique pattern of relationships. Its leaders and followers have historically stressed the role of government to defend small, poor voices against the powerful and wealthy. It's power against power. America is an anti-state nation. "That government is best which governs least," as H. D. Thoreau once wrote, and has been endlessly repeated in the United States from the time of the Civil War through the current, unhappy US presidency. Populism calls out to disadvantaged people in need, asking for and promising a commonwealth either not yet realized or that's been taken away. ("Every Man a King", as Huey Long's campaign song and motto had it back in US Great Depression times.) Keeps coming back because traditional, party-based solutions never quite meet popular demands to address current problems. Because populist leaders of all persuasions keep springing up in America who promise to control, re-direct, or override outdated, traditional, political party leadership. And, not least because, as Michael Foucault wrote, there "are more ideas on earth than intellectuals imagine. And these 'ideas' are more active, stronger, more resistant than 'politicians' think" (Foucault 1978).

Populism has had two dominant strains in the United States, *Civic* and *Contrarian* Populism. First, *Civic Populism*, aka communitarian populism, has been a force visible in such national, 20th–21st century politicians as Frank-

lin Delano Roosevelt, Martin Luther King and ex-President Obama. In early 20th century Detroit, populism was exemplified by the early social policies of Henry Ford (1863–1947); by the life-long politics and policies of his son the businessman, art patron, philanthropist and automotive designer Edsel Ford (1893–1943); in the tumultuous career of Ford Motor Company treasurer, Detroit mayor, and US Senator James Couzens (1872–1936); and Detroit mayor and US Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy (1890–1949)—all of whom optimistically yet imperfectly grasped for their city's and America's best common interests. When there's a problem, civic populism looks for a reason—not a scapegoat; which is why it's a more generous operating principle with the foreigner, the alien, and better at international relations.

The Fords older and younger are good examples of the city's civic populism. For Henry Ford this is specially visible in his early Model T years of the 'Teens and early Twenties. When he genuinely worked for the cooperative good of both his workers and his company. It was the same battle. He practiced a pragmatic Progressive reformism with the commitment to his Sociological Department. But then turned tail and ran away from his Progressive policies when he couldn't reconcile ever increasing productivity—specially at the new Rouge plant; built 1917–1928 and mainly supervised by the anti-Sociological Department, FMC executive Charles Sorensen (aka "Cast Iron Charlie"). A vision of Detroit as what can be best in a worker's America is startling visible in Diego Rivera's greatest work, his astonishing Detroit Industry Murals (1932–33)—the Sistine Chapel of US 20th century Industrialism which Diego Rivera rooted in Detroit and which existed because of Edsel Ford's direct and constant moral, financial and political support (Dean 2015, 194–203).

People exemplify principle. When, for example, Mayor James Couzens congratulated Detroit's World War One returning veterans, he "kissed'em and cursed'em" at the same time in a proclamation he personally sent to them. On the one hand this immigrant's son Couzens praised Detroit's soldier-citizens for the "devotion and unselfishness with which you carried on the work great and small that was entrusted to you". Then warned them: "Having helped to win one great war, you have come home to another not less momentous—the age-long, day-by-day struggle against corruption and greed and civic autocracy. In this fight there is no armistice. From this service there is no honorable discharge. The city welcomes you to the firing line" ("James Couzens's Letter." 2018).

Whether as police commissioner (1916–1918) or as mayor (1918–1922), Couzens worked in much the same conscientious, generous yet realistic fashion. He was there as the consistent, in-power, highest-ranking civic official overlooking and guiding the intense ethnic hodgepodge that was Detroit in the World War One years. With Couzens it was always the need, the issue, the man or woman themselves that counted—never a nationality, a religion, or playing for political favoritism. When he was Detroit's police commissioner, Couzens prowled the patchwork quilt of the city's streets and ethnic neighborhoods day and night incognito. He "talked to policeman, to saloonkeepers, to streetwalkers, and to ordinary citizens" to discover what their key problems were and what had to be done to address and redress them (Barnard 2002, 108). Forget about automobiles in Detroit, he improved cheap streetcar transportation. (The one most commonly used by Detroit's multi-ethnic labor force.) And when mayor in 1921—when anti-German sentiment lingered in Detroit and all of the cities doctors and medical societies refused to work with Dr. Adolf Lorenz of Vienna to use the Lorenz treatment on children with polio—Couzens opened the municipal hospitals to Lorenz and denounced the doctors for "un-American intolerance". Not until Fiorello LaGuardia became mayor in New York City (1934–1945) did America see the likes again of a city's chief executive who truly acted without bias for the good of all the people (Barnard 2002, 121). Couzens was a key reason that Detroit seemed a kind of workers' paradise to many in the 1920s, built up out of the crucible and struggles of the World War One era.

On the Contrary

Second dominant US strain has been *Contrarian Populism*, aka authoritarian populism. This has been visible in 20th–21st century America in a range from Louisiana's Huey Long (1893–1935) and Detroit's own anti-Semitic Father Coughlin (1891–1979), who strenuously denounced international bankers, declared "Democracy is over" and openly defended Hitler (Lewis 1993, 238), to the early Malcolm X (1925–1965) through Donald J. Trump (1946–). The contrarian strain has been specially powered with ego and crowd zealotry by figures who have worked sledgehammer ways of social persuasion that have bludgeoned people and institutions into desired channels, to follow or get out of the way while they alone—the leader—knows and shows the way.

On the whole, US contrarian populism has been politically right rather than left. This kind of populism needs the bugbear, the insidious target, the Other against which We The People can vent anger and a sense of injustice. It's *their* fault. It's White people or the Jews or the Elite or the Huns or the Media or whoever serves best to explain the aggrieved and unreconciled population's sense of loss for what they feel is properly theirs. But theirs no longer. In the USA's First World War home front contrarian populism specially declared itself in anger against German immigrants who didn't profess full-fledged, red-white-and-blue all-Americanism, who dared to defend things German. This included serious problems for German-American beer, such as the Anhauser-Busch company and their Budweiser brand. This problem was particularly intense in those recent and established areas where German settlement had a strong local flavor, the Upper and Central Midwest.

The machine speaks for populism, one way or the other. Not only do human individuals exemplify populism, but a good case can be made for *things*, the visible, aggressive, outspoken populism of material culture. The populism of machinery has been a two-edged sword. A medium such as Detroit's radio in the 'Teens and Twenties, or things such as its automobiles or trolleys could articulate populist values left, right or center. Thus British author J. G. Ballard consistently made the point about how popular aesthetics speak for mankind in the 20th century. They aren't just things, they are embodied spirits. Made objects have an attitude of their own, broadcasting a message to everyone. Whether one sees this populist message in a car for the masses or an automobile for the classes:

> I suspect that many of the great cultural shifts that prepare the way for political change are largely aesthetic. A Buick radiator grille is as much a political statement as a Rolls Royce radiator grille, one enshrining a machine aesthetic driven by a populist optimism, the other enshrining a hierarchical and exclusive social order. (Ballard 2004)

"Machinery is the new messiah," as Henry Ford declared to fellow Detroiters in his early Model T (1908–1927) years. In the World War One years, American machinery was all the rage as the war blazed on in Europe. "Ts" were the ambulances at the French Western Front, saviors of oak, petrol and steel. While Fordson tractors were saving the day for the laborless farms and farmers

in England. By 1916 American factories and farms were profiting considerably from the war. Was the next logical step armaments? Sometimes there's a Sorcerer's Apprentice fury to mass production and productivity. Wilson's fighting words to America, his rallying call to "help keep the world safe for democracy" was also a moral imperative for magnificent, monstrous machinery. Was this contrarian populism with a vengeance, out to get the Hun, the Heinie, the Kraut? Here were objects that spoke only through the will and direction of the men who gave the liberty of 30-06 Springfield cartridges to their M1917 Enfield rifles, their "American Enfield" long gun. And could these machine or others like them be used at home? In Woodrow Wilson's USA to defend America against foreigners?

Detroit's Ford Motor Company Example

The state of Michigan, and particularly the city of Detroit in the first half of the 20th century, "invited the immigrant" who was "led on by an entrancing vision" of an immense area rich in fertile fields, vast forests, farms and factories and specially by the boom town Detroit that couldn't stop growing and offering extraordinary opportunities for employment and good wages (Catton 1976, 156). You could get the foreigners there easy enough. But the next step was to secure their allegiance and reliability.

The best known and ring-on-the-carrousel deal here was the world-renowned Ford Motor Company's five-dollar-day policy that was cooked up by Treasurer Frank Couzens and President Henry Ford in fall-winter 1913–1914. When officially adopted on January 5, 1914, news of the Ford Motor Company (FMC) five-dollar-day spread rapidly, with this family company seen as having the "most advanced labor policy in the world… regarded by wage earners from Sydney to Bangkok, from New York to Copenhagen, as a source of hope and inspiration" (Nevins and Hill 1954, 541). Thus "Detroit became in 1914 what California had been in 1849, the end of the rainbow" for the world's workingmen (Lewis 1976, 72).

Ford Motor Company's five-dollar-day wasn't charity. The going wage for automotive factory work at that time in Detroit was about $2.00–$2.25 a day (equivalent to $48.64–$54.71 in 2016). But the assembly line work required of them was excruciating. Factories found it very hard to keep workers on. Here was the magnet, the glue. Not without strings. To qualify

for the $5 salary the FMC worker had to be vetted constantly by the company's Sociology Department. This was headed first by John R. Lee (1913–1919) and then the Reverend Samuel S. Marquis (1919–1921). The FMC Sociological Department was an early form of a Human Resources department; existed to maximize human capital and to promote employee welfare by organizing and instituting a secular program of self-improvement for the Ford employee and his family.

This business policy was the product of paternalistic Progressive Movement thinking, and to no small part the ego of Henry Ford himself (who immediately claimed full credit for the whole thing and tried to repeat the performance in 1919 and 1929) (Nevins and Hill 1954, 512–541). Under the leadership of Lee and Marquis and with the full, yet slowly wavering, cooperation of Henry Ford, FMC's five-dollar-day plan's complementary Sociological Department ran intense classes in the English language and American civics, tried to correct the social abuses and evils of industrialism, limit discrimination, gave Home Economics training to workers' wives, and tried generally to provide a higher quality of everyday American life for its workers.

The company promoted it vigorously as a patent-free formula that could be used by everyone. In September 1915 fifty important representatives of "employers of labor in Detroit" were invited to a free lunch at the Ford Motor Company's administration building to learn how the Sociological Department worked. These industry leaders were instructed how in sixteen months of work more than three thousand men "totally ignorant of English" had been successfully trained by volunteer teachers in the English language along with "drills in citizenship, instruction in the form of government in the United States, Michigan and Detroit, and other matters designed to give the man a grasp on the ideas and methods in vogue in this country." The profit was three-fold: created more efficient and better understanding in plants, improved living conditions for the men and their families, and led to the "betterment of...the citizenship of Detroit" ("English Education." *Detroit Free Press* September 1, 1915, 1). The word spread. Soon Detroit would be the national model—supported by federal aid from D.C. and philanthropic or patriotic groups from Boston to Los Angeles—for how to best educate and Americanize

the immigrant.[4] Whether it trained three thousand or three hundred thousand men into the realm of US citizenship and American English, FMC's notoriously well-advertized Sociological Department's end result was the same. It broke down difference. It smoothed away the sharp edges and distinguishing contours of different cultures and languages and shaped individuals from one of Detroit's thick, irregular clusters of almost fifty different civilizations into the neat, workaday fit needed for factory work or war effort mass mobilization.

God & the Devil in the Details

To look closer into the details of the thing—a typical, specific example of a problem which the FMC found their foreign-born workers' families suffered from was the ruthless employment of the very young. The city's immigrants and ethnic groups were easily cut off and ingrown. Self-isolated through lack of English, knowledge of or sympathy for ordinary American customs, they were set apart to fester by force of circumstances and a manic need to survive or do well. A judge in Detroit's Juvenile Court in 1912 singled out Polish immigrant families with "the father, the mother, and five, six, or seven children all working" to the detriment of health, home, lack of education and increase of illiteracy, social isolation and ghettoization, and ultimately the children's' descent into juvenile delinquency and a life of crime (Nevins and Hill 1954, 518–519).

How to mix and mingle the outsiders into the mainstream? At Ford Motor Company the workers were a notorious blend of nationalities, many of who spoke only a rudimentary English or none at all, and depended on the *padrone* system of their own cultural group and enclaved neighborhoods to establish themselves in greater Detroit. Previous to the Sociological Department's existence, company administrators saw how immigrant newcomers were regularly cheated regarding their living conditions and insertion into everyday American life. The exploitation of their good will, aspirations and wages

[4] When the city of Detroit used these methods thet were far less intrusive into the personal, home life of the immigrant, confined more to the adult education classroom, that was FMC's Sociological Department.

ricocheted into creating a slack labor force. Thus the five-dollar-plan stipulated that an employee "must show himself sober, saving, steady, industrious and must satisfy the superintendent and staff that his money will not be wasted in riotous living" ("Couzen's statement." *Everybody's Magazine* 30, April 1914, 463). More than language learning, this was the inculcation of American middle-class values. A Ford company team of about one hundred and sixty men fanned out and did the investigative and advisory work assuring this happened. Among the initial, high-principled team was Henry Ford's close colleague the controversial James Couzens and Ford's only son the conscientious Edsel Ford.

Policy was adamant in the Sociological Departments' early years that everything had to be done to *help* a worker, not harm him, not find an excuse to fire him. This was meant to be a profit sharing plan that nourished and maintained competent workers. It was founded on the time-honored, win-win principle of he who helps others helps himself. It was like a harnessed adage of Ben Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*. The factory got more prosperous, happier workers. The immigrant or disadvantaged employees—at an American time when practically no government-run social services existed and industrial unions were illegal or functionally impractical—were introduced and taught to adapt to mainstream American social, economic and hygienic standards. From the era's standpoint the company offered a generous, gainful system. At a cost.

FMC's Sociology Department prefigured what the US military would do with its foreign recruits—within the confines of barracks and bases, companies and squadrons. Not that the Sociological Department had a one-on-one relation with the armed forces model. It was Detroit's prominent example. It was in the liberal air of US time that community responsibility, social welfare, scientific management and duty (which the rich had to the poor in the manner of Ruskin, Carlyle and Britain's Toynbee Hall) could together create forces and structures that would reorder, reform and regenerate an American society overflowing with cultural change. What Henry and Edsel Ford, Frank Couzens, Lee, Marquis and their team accomplished in the best days of the Sociological Department was more than matched by Jane Addams' accomplishments in her Chicago Hull-House settlement (estab. 1889, closed 2012). These were the day's two most conspicuous models of middle agents that mediated common civic goals for America's immigrants and lower socio-economic classes. Their fundamental principle was the elitism of social

stewardship—which would work very well for what the US military, would then function as social logic when dealing with Army's intake of aliens and immigrants in World War One.[5]

It was a big money, patriarchal time. An enormous concentration of wealth, economic productivity and political power was held by private hands in America. For example, the US Constitution's seventeenth amendment that made the direct election of US Senators law did not come into effect until April 8, 1913. Until then Senators were elected by their fellow politicians, by state legislatures, more often than not representing big-money local interests (Kennedy 2004, 11). Maybe the immigrants traded their *padrone* for the company boss.

It was no small order to assist Detroit's struggling workers. With FMC's Sociological Department a humanitarian matter was seen as sound business. The company's program was an outstanding, hands-on model upon which American armed forces would build in WW1 when the military needed to quickly integrate and assimilate a large body of fresh, male immigrant civilians, often illiterate, into its own martial factory. The FMC model was also bittersweet. The Sociological Department could not remove the injustices that made their help necessary. Child labor, prostitution and chronic alcoholism didn't disappear in Detroit because the Sociological Department saved some families. It got them out, provided an alternative. More, the Ford's Sociological Department itself, a glory of American reform, disappeared like a snowball before the blast furnaces of Ford's Rouge Factory and Mr. Ford's demand for more and better, and more, production soon after World War One. The Sociological Department wasn't efficient. How could it be? How could

[5] FMC's Sociology Department effectively broke up when Henry Ford changed it into an internal police force—"Ford Service"—then the world's largest private police force of 3,000 thugs and spies, under the leadership of the odious Harry Bennett (1892–1979). Couzens developed into a staunch Roosevelt liberal, literally got out of his deathbed to stump for FDR. Edsel Ford and his wife Eleanor led a stress-filled and strenuous life, privately opposing but publicly complementing Henry Ford to keep the business running successfully, giving great attention to endowing the arts as key civilizing agents, assisting philanthropies (particularly Jewish), with Edsel Ford personally creating the Ford Foundation which would become the world's largest NGO—stressing innovative education and cultural pluralism—until the late 20th century.

it have the assembly line efficiency that gladdened the heart of Henry Ford? The business of social work was bound to be clumsy, inefficient, slow and humane.

At the end of the day, didn't the Sociological Department method mean that the powerful took control of and instructed the weak in how to emulate the powerful? Learn loyalty to things American. Obey and serve. For if this reform work had been truly done for the good of all—then how did the weak, the powerless, contribute on their own terms, at the company, on company grounds? The answer would come with Detroit's industrial union movement that developed in the 1930s with US federal government support and an astonishing generation of young, innovative, persistent union leaders, specially the German-American Walter Reuther (1907–1970).

To Go to War

If America was to go to war successfully, the nation itself had to create ties that bind out of a country that did not. The government had to lasso cats, coral kangaroos for a walk in the park. In their neighborhoods and ethnic clubs, corner taverns and visitors-come-for-company front parlors, in their boarding houses, squalid rooms and rented beds (that men rented to sleep in for one of three, separate, 8-hour, no-clean-sheets shifts), or in their local churches and temples where services were weekly given in Latin, Greek, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yiddish, Polish, Hungarian, German, Russian and a host of other tongues, and in their well-intentioned and underfunded philanthropic organizations that tried to help with the impossible numbers of their civic, social and hygienic needs—America's swelling immigrant ethnic groups had been let to develop pretty much on their own.

Now they had to be organized in a common cause, for the United States of America. Be organized. This was not to be an altogether Do It Yourself business. The United States was a boiling cauldron of strong, mixed opinions about the war, both among mainstream Americans and within the immigrant population itself. This division of attitudes is evident in the US popular culture of the time. One can hear it in the day's hit songs, played at home on living room pianos, like: "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" or "Mama, Where is Papa? Tell me why he don't come home", or in that haunting, funeral music song "Till We Meet Again" or maudlin "Take Care of Mother While Daddy's

Over There".[6] One saw it in the ambiguity of *The Big Parade*'s ending on that awful old battlefield in France. And in the opinion of the 1917 Hollywood movie *The Spirit of '76* about the American Revolution and the beastly Brits. This last film, like Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot* (2000), depicted British atrocities against their own colonists during the Revolutionary War, complete in *The Spirit of '76* with British rape and baby killing. Depending upon what region, social strata or language and culture group you came from or looked at, at least a quarter of the sympathies in the popular culture by 1917 were against America's involvement in the war.

America's anti-war sentiment was off set with the joyous sounds of pro-war topical songs. There was "Johnny Get Your Gun", "Over There" and George M. Cohan's "It's a Grand Old Flag". The war trumpet blown loudly and most effectively by the work of the federal government's Creel Committee that sponsored and produced its vast array of social persuasion pamphlets, posters, films, catchy music and jingoistic lyrics, along with the best-known visual representation of Uncle Sam to date (by James Montgomery Flagg), and over 75,000 "four-minute men" public speakers—the purpose of all to overwhelm the public with dedication to the war through the uncompromising grip of propaganda. By virtue of the June 1917 Espionage Act, this was all that was allowed.

Europeans

A sample of contrary opinions exposes the continent of differing opinions that lay beneath. A century ego in 1916 the so-called "special relationship" that's labeled the United States and Great Britain since World War Two

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[6] "Take Care of Mother" (1918) by Sym Winkel, words and music; "Till We Meet Again" (1918) by Raymond B. Egan, Richard A. Whitling; "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" (1915) or "Mama, Where is Papa?" (c. 1918); these WW1 songs found at: http://detroiths.pastperfect-online.com/. NB: Released 1915, "I Didn't Raise My Son to be a Soldier" was USA's first commercially successful anti-war record, featured in US anti-war movement that opposed WW1 entry. Teddy Roosevelt objected to the song's peace message (and feminism), saying: "Foolish people who applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier' are just the people who would also in their hearts applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise my Girl To Be A Mother." See at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C2qOAgMCl4.

had for far longer been the "explosive relationship". During WW1 the British first appeared to be perpetuating an old US-British friction that extended back to the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. The ocean-commanding British interfered with US shipping on the high seas. The old Bulldog practiced seizures and diversions of US boats on the Atlantic and interfered with the mails. Most if not all of America's Irish population sympathized with the revolution being fomented by U. S. citizen Eamon De Valera, along with James Connolly and Michael Collins, against Great Britain; had no love loss for John Bull, would like to see the bully taken down. What was the sense of fighting along side your oldest enemy in a war? By 1916 many feared that a US breach with England was imminent (Cochran and Andrews 1962, 1025–1027). In 1916 the German U Boat *Deutschland* was the first submarine to cross the Atlantic from Europe, albeit on a "civic" visit to the USA, and jubilantly docked in Baltimore, Maryland. The feted *Deutschland*'s commander Paul Liebrecht König was even invited to the White House to celebrate the event (Koenig 2018).[7]

Detroit was a hot spot for British-American relations. Streets were lined with a dramatic poster from the British and Canadian Recruiting Mission that displayed an English soldier leaning over the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, shaking hands with an American gentleman in a blue suit, distinguished moustache and snappy fedora hat. The poster's caption proclaimed in bold, capital letters: "**BRITISHERS** YOU'RE NEEDED COME ACROSS **NOW**" (Myers 1917). Detroit was a border town with Windsor, Canada, where an enormous number of non-American citizens ferried in everyday to work in the city; with only an estimated 7% regularly turned back. (A few years later the dashing young Prince of Wales would even pop over for a surprise visit.) Rule Britannia was a constant refrain from this group. The English in America haughtily sympathized with the cause of Great Britain and its Entente Allies. Detroit's Americans had to be reassured that though "of course the English do not make us their ideal," still "America is more like Britain than

[7] See: "German Submarine Deutschland's Atlantic Crossing by Captain Paul Koenig," http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/deutschland1.htm; Koenig: "We trust that the old friendly relationship with the United States, going back to the days of Washington, when it was Prussia who was the first to help America in its fight for freedom from British rule, will awake afresh in your beautiful and powerful country".

we dreamed. We are, whether we like it or not, still something of the same strain" ("English Really Like." *Detroit Free Press*, June 25, 1917, 4).

The nationless and nation-seeking American Jews thought back on the terrible sufferings so many of them had undergone in Russia. Initially this group generally judged the Germans to be a more civilized people and deserving of their respect. Why fight alongside the nation of *pogroms* and *shtetls*? While America's Polish population was stuck between Scylla and Carbides; possessing a culture, a nation, but no nation-state yet. And so by late 1915 in the Detroit area three thousand Poles were training in US military camps. The stated purpose was "to prepare Poles in the U.S. to free Poland *or* to defend the U.S. in war," said sub-Lieutenant Waclaw Stzpiniski, one of the commanders of the Polish recruits. The Polish group was trained under the auspices of the US Military *and* the Polish Young Men's Military Association (PYMMA); the PYMMA having a large branch in Detroit as in a few other American cities. Striking here with the Detroit area Polish group is how the women were also involved, instructed "in red Cross activities" ("Polish Aliens", *Detroit Free Press*, December 17, 1915, 1). The Polish-American story and Detroit is outstanding. By the mid-1920s Polish monarchists in Europe asked Henry Ford to assume their country's throne (Lewis 1976, 185).

German-Americans were a specially conflicted and suffering group during the war. This is a story unto itself, splintered into a hundred thousand parts. Oily, genuine German sabotage from outside and pro-German attitude from inside spilled out to feed the flames of America's anti-German prejudice. This resentment was also encouraged by the relentless badgering of Germans in America by the Wilson's Committee on Public Information, more by the president's hard policies than by his high-minded, professorial, abstract pronouncements. During the war, German-American churches and school buildings were burned, German-language newspapers confiscated or destroyed, people tarred and feathered, Germans terrorized into buying US war bonds. Still, state-sponsored German espionage in America was real, although it concerned a very small number of Germans. Though tarred everyone of their kind with its brush (Tuchman 1984). To make matters worse, COs from

German-American Mennonite and Hutterite communities suffered atrocities.[8] About a thousand Hutterites and seven hundred Mennonites of draft age fled America illegally and immigrated to Canada, following the wartime death in Alcatraz and Fort Leavenworth prisons of the two young Hutterite Hofer brothers (Teichroew 1971; Brock and Young 1999, 56–57). People of these pacifist persuasions, along with the Amish, suffered less when they were more acculturated, as in the Detroit area or in parts of Pennsylvania.

It was a profoundly traumatic experience for the German-American community. This oppression latter backfired in the USA. By the mid-1930s the Detroit Branch of the Legion of German War Veterans were meeting in the *Deutsches Haus* at the corner of Mack and Maxwell Avenues to sing the Star Spangled Banner and the Nazi Party anthem *Horst-Wessel-Lied* ("Souvenir Program", Detroit Historical Society 2018). Pro-Nazi, German-American nationalism increased in the American 1920s and 30s with the flourishing Free Society of Teutonia, the Friends of New Germany, the German American Bund; along with such highly-vocal and media-savvy Nazi supporters and far right populist leaders as Detroit's Canadian-American, Catholic Priest Father Coughlin (1891–1979), the US presidential candidate Gerald K. Smith (1898–1976) and the national hero and aviator—aka "Slim", "The Lone Eagle", "Lucky Lindy"—Detroit's own Charles Augustus Lindbergh (1902–1974).

Curiously America's German-Americans are one group that has never produced their own story, their own witness, their own version in a great, immigrant-American novel. Unlike the Irish, Jews, Italians and many others. Even though Germans are the single largest national group that's ever immigrated to America. Perhaps because the damage to their national identity lies too deep to allow *Mutterland* expression to be released. The Austrians fared little better in popular opinion and reactions. The case of Dr. Adolf Lorenz of Vienna from Vienna in Detroit was already mentioned. While Hollywood's resident Viennese actor Erich von Stroheim had played so many evil Prussians during WW1 that it wasn't safe for him to go out on American streets for a long time afterward. "When he was recognized, stones were thrown at his automobile" (Vanderhaeghe 2005, 128).

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[8] Originally from Friesland and the Tyrol, but associated in the USA with Germany.

Public Opinion

To understand how immigrants, foreigners, aliens communities and individuals fared in US secular, civic society and in the US military during the war time itself, it's necessary to display and digest a chronology of key events that effected the American and non-American sense of national and cultural identity in the USA. Soon after Wilson declared war on April 6, 1917, aware of the deep divide in national consensus about the war in general and the specific, contrary feelings among those Americans linked to the Central Power nations (Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire/Turkey)—as opposed to the Allies (England, France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Japan, Portugal)—Wilson created the Committee on Public Information (CPI, 1917–19). This was America's first official propaganda agency, headed by journalist and publicist George Creel (1876–1953). The CPI flooded the United States with a wave of over one hundred million propaganda pamphlets, posters, magazines and newspapers published in both English and foreign languages, along with seventy five thousand "four-minute men" public speakers who'd promoted the war cause at public gatherings (Creel 1920; Fleming 2003).

The political warfare waged by the CPI was widely criticized for attempting to force Americans to accept the war news and interpretation of events that the government chose to reveal as true. Media was not global at that time, thus censorship was generally effective. Action fed headlines and articles, rarely critical analysis (indeed, anti-war writing was soon against the law with the Espionage and Sedition Acts). News was another weapon as far as American authorities were concerned. It created popular, populist, mass mobilization consensus. Later, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt created his Works Progress Administration (WPA) to fight the domestic war against the Great Depression in 1935, Roosevelt made George Creel chairman of its WPA's National Advisory Board; same tool, invaluable expertise, different objective. World War One altered US liberal understanding of how the state could take a decisive, intrusive role in social, cultural and economic redistribution and control (Clarke 2017). All that came from CPI was not bad.

The CPI's long-term result was twofold. Like the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic bomb and led to the first earth-shattering firecracker string of nuclear weapons and atomic energy, the CPI was built and used without knowing the full consequences of what this new power created

and involved. Once made, there was no going back; not a force that could be un-invented. (Which its followers—WW1's British Ministry of Information or Joseph Goebbel's *Propagandaministerium*—surely recognized.) First, the CPI greatly fostered national consensus favorable to the war. But it wasn't the only factor. Before the CPI or even the Selective Service could really get under way, young immigrants flocked to recruiting stations. At the US Army tent on the city hall lawn in Detroit in early May 1917, foreign born and aliens with only first papers overwhelmed the recruiters. "Among the Army recruits the ratio of American to foreign born is ten to one, in favor of the later," the *Detroit Free Press* declared. The US Army was wracking its collective brain to gather and recruit "young Americans" ("Army Takes Lead", *Detroit Free Press* 1917, May 4, 12). (A problem solved on May 18th by the federal government.)

Another driving force was the inspiration of changed minds and commitments made by US public figures who had favored helping foreigners and had previously rejected the war or declared themselves to be pacifists to help European suffering. Such was Henry Ford, who had "never preached pacifism to the point of nonresistance" (Gelderman 1981, 139). So now Ford, Bryan and others put shoulder to the wheel for the war effort as well. Everyone got on board. Almost. If they didn't, like Will Crapo Durant, who originally created General Motors in 1908, the result was a disaster for their career.

But secondly, the CPI incited intolerance about criticism of the war effort, encouraged ethnic prejudice against Germans in particular, and created a lingering insecurity about dangerous foreigners in America. This contributed to the development of the Red Scare and Palmer Raids in the late 'Teens, early Twenties, encouraged nativism along the lines of the burgeoning Ku Klux Klan and Black Legion, provided inspiration for Henry Ford's own anti-Semitic, anti-alien, anti-immigrant *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* (1920–1922). Henry Ford's monument to prejudice was firmly rejected by Henry Ford's wife Clara Bryant Ford, his son and daughter-in-law Edsel and Eleanor Ford, along with numerous colleagues in Detroit (Dean 2018).

Curiously reminiscent of the reception of *The Birth of a Nation* in 1916 Detroit, local protest against Henry Ford's calumny was fairly muted at the time.[9]

Get the Men

The US war had two huge conscription waves, three draft calls. The first initiated April 6, 1917 and secured by the Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, was for all eligible men from age 21 to 30; the second draft of August 1918 stretched maximum age to 45 (US National Archives 2018; www.sss.gov; www.legisworks.gov). With approximately 24 million men registered, the total force mobilized by war's end by the United States was 4,355,00. Some two million US military served overseas, 200,000 of which were officers (Dupuy and Dupuy 1986, 976, 990).

In the composition of USA's WW1 military it's striking how social class played a prominent role multiplying acquired officer status. Thus in early May 1917 Detroit, in order to encourage more young Americans to sign up, "Captain Upton Shreve of the officers reserve corps of Harvard University will speak before the recruiting tent at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon" ("Army Takes Lead", Detroit Free Press 1917, May 4, 12). Follow the upper class leader.

The American Expeditionary Force (AEF) to Europe was *the* decisive factor in the final victory of the Allied Forces. It made a difference who won this war (although it's peace was one hell of a mess). "Comparisons are invidious," as Dupuy notes in his definitive *Encyclopedia of Military History*, concerning the nature and distinction of the war's leaders, battles and troops. The American role in 1917–18 added a "final increment of numbers and fresh initiative, permitting the much larger and more experienced Allied armies to achieve equally spectacular successes in the final weeks of the war" (Dupuy and Dupuy 1986, 985). The US Army formed itself slowly and with rough, raw material. By the Winter 1917-18, it was estimated that among initial draft of immigrants about 1% "knew the English language well enough

[9] *The International Jew* was originally published as a series in the Henry Ford owned and directed The Dearborn Independent newspaper-magazine; it was then published in series book form; ultimately distributed copyright free by Henry Ford.

to understand the instructions necessary to make them first-class fighting men" (Ford 2009, 68) At the same time in the winter of 1917-18: US General Staff officially estimated that 25% of all tested enlisted men were illiterate (Ford 2009, 67).

Then problems were classified and organized separately. In January 1918, N. D. Baker established the Foreign-speaking Soldier Subsection (FSS) under the Military Intelligence Section. Its brief was "improvement in the treatment of alien personnel within the army". Yet by September 1918 there were still about 100,000 ethnic soldiers in the US military who couldn't speak English. By the time the US Army did get to Europe with soldiers trained American and non-American, Europeans called the US Army the "American Foreign Legion" (Kennedy 2004, 157).

Military Matters

At the time of the First World War there wasn't even a good coast-to-coast highway that went across America (Weingroff 2018). Ordinary people communicated by postal letter and telegraph, pneumatic tubes in the big cities, occasionally a bicycle and messenger boy, carrier pigeon, carrier messenger boy, and pioneering Rural Free Delivery service via stagecoach, horse and buggy, horse rider or Model T. It is no wonder that the enforcement and regulation of the military in World War One was not seamlessly uniform. There were lots of local exceptions, as well as local favoritism and pull. Military conditions were reminiscent of the USA's Vietnam War years, only more so. The best studies of this subject are fine—especially Nancy Gentile Ford's *American All! Foreign-born Soldiers in World War 1* (2001) and David M. Kennedy's *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (1980). But they make the reality more coherent than it actually was. More to the point, neither Ford nor Kennedy wrote their history from the inside out. There's no reason to believe or proof to show that they worked with the actual foreign-language based archives and foreign language resources, books, letters, memoires and autobiographies themselves. Much information is second, third or fourth hand in *Over Here* and *Americans All!*. The roots, trunk and branches of analysis do not drink from the fountains of the original sources. When writing about the foreign, they are foreign themselves.

Remember that close to fifty cultures and languages were involved in this WW1 speedy and unprecedented US military induction and organization process. Which wound up producing alien soldiers that fought within standard US military divisions, which fought in their own-language and culture divisions that trained in the United States and then went abroad to fight for other countries in The Great War. There were even groups of American citizens of Euro-American origin who went to fight against Allied Forces, for the Central Powers. One can highlight the following groups (with good reason to believe there are numerous other untapped examples of individuals and groups)[10]: the US military's Foreign Speaking Soldier Subsection (FSS); the Foreign Legion band of the US military (FLB); Czechoslovak Legion (CL); Czechoslovak Legion in France (CLF), which included about 3,000 volunteers from USA's ethnic enclaves); the Polish Army in America (PAA); Polish Legion (PL); the Polish Falcons (aka: the Polish Falcon Alliance, PF); American Contingent of the Polish Army in France (ACPAF); the Jewish Legion (JL) (Totten 2018; Fosdick 1958; Ford 2009; Polish Falcons 2018). The national story as focused down on local example begins when the US War Department established the Foreign Speaking Soldier Subsection (FSSS) in January 1915. It was headed at first, as one would expect, by a New England scion of America, D. Chauncey Brewer, who had been head of the Boston Chamber of Commerce in 1912. Mr. Brewer ran the FSSS for five months, when he disagreed with army policies and was replaced by Lt. Herbert A. Horgan. At which point more attention was paid to ethnic identity and the FSS organized its "immigrants into ethnic specific companies commanded by immigrant and second-generation soldiers" (Ford 2009, 13).

What had happened? There's an old story told in the American army about how early one morning a gruff sergeant called his new recruits to attention in the initial year of the USA's participation in the First World War. As he bellowed out his rise and shine wake-up call his troops snapped upright and stiff as a line of fence posts. He then proceeded to bark out the roll call. None of the men answered. He roared out his soldiers' names again. Still no one

[10] Other examples of ethnic US soldiers who fought for England, France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Japan, or Portugal (Allied Powers); or Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire-Turkey (Central Powers).

budged. Flustered the sergeant exploded with an enormous sneeze—when suddenly ten recruits snapped forward and saluted him. Which illustrates on the one hand the linguistic and cultural confusion on the part of mainstream America regarding its huge new immigrant population. That sergeant expected what he'd previously known. He was used to *Adams*, *Jones*, *Franklin*, *Wilson*, *Stone* and *Ford*, not *Fuchs*, *Schwarz*, *Çelik*, *Apostolov*, *Schuster*, *Sapozhnik* and *Zelichenok*, *Chmielewski*, *Kapustka* and *Stachowski*. Beginning with the Horgan regime, the US military tried to adapt to its men, as well as the other way around.[11]

In Winter 1917–18, the US Army appointed Lt. Stanislaw A. Gutowski at Michigan's newly created Camp Custer to organize soldiers based on their individual nationality and language groups. This was FSSS work. Gutowski also worked as a kind of roving diplomat investigating and helping with this US Army issue elsewhere in America. Under his direction, qualified bilingual soldiers were then promoted to become officers in charge of these groups. This development was given the name Camp Gordon Plan, with US soldiers separated into language groups headed by officers who spoke the soldiers' own language. (But usually didn't graduate from Harvard.) With communications gap bridged, their military training then continued in their native language ("Latinos in World War" 2018). This wasn't Pollyanna do-goodism. But part of a two-pronged pattern by the US government to integrate and investigate.

In effect, foreign immigrant soldiers were being advanced and given rights analogous to how the US armed services were integrated black and white—before US civil society—in July, 1948, due to President Harry Truman's Executive Order 9981. Truman partly did that on principle, partly to help secure the black vote for the Democratic Party. But the US Army's development of the FSSS seemed systemic, less political and moral principled than Truman's 1948 action; essentially done to create a better functioning, more harmonious military. The Army's own version of Scientific Management and Taylorism.

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[11] I first heard this story at a VFW Post on Pączki Day in Hamtramck, Michigan—a city that had been mainly Polish, within the confines of Detroit. But it is also related by D. M. Kennedy in *Over Here* (1980).

To Harness and to Serve

Another important step for the immigrant soldier was the creation of the US Military Commission on Training Camp Activities (CTCA) under the direction of Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969); one of his key sayings: "Preaching is personal counseling on a group basis". Relentlessly realistic and upbeat, a darling of the media, an apostle of positive-minded self-improvement, under Fosdick's direction the CTCA was responsible for addressing the kind of acute problems of sanitation (infantry: keep your feet clean) and morals (men: keep your **** clean) that had plagued the allies at war. Practical as well as moral, it was a well-known fact that large numbers of troops in European armies were incapacitated because of social diseases.

Fosdick, with the full assent and cooperation of the US Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, recruited the assistance of competent ethnic and religious associations—such as the Jewish Welfare association and the Catholic Knights of Columbus—that addressed their aid to recruits on base. Problems addressed included alcoholism, personal cleanliness, and venereal diseases (which had disabled an estimated sixty divisions of the Central Powers); addressed not by giving out prophylactics to US troops, but by educating the men in English or in their own native language about just what was happening. Most of them did not know. Their level of ignorance was phenomenal. Many functioned by rumor only (Boyer 1978).

Religion was then harnessed as an intelligent, psychological tactic that offered the immigrant soldier respect and dignity. Fosdick was not a Bible-thumping literalist. In complement ethnic holidays were respected, access to worship facilitated, special foods (kosher for Jewish soldiers, fish on Friday for Catholics) provided. Morale among troops who initially felt alienated improved. In addition, social activities were provided by these groups that matched the soldiers' own ethnic, cultural, religious identities. Group sing-alongs using and blending the likes of "Row Row Row Your Boat" with a song from their own culture or language were a big deal. This recognition and blending accepted and accentuated the soldier's ethnic pride and educated them in accord with the chief directions and trends of American values. "Row row row", for example, was all about teamwork. Teamwork, that American first line of defense. You're only as good as the people who work for you;

the weakest link in the chain. Or as Benjamin Franklin said when signing the *Declaration of Independence*: "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

What's ironic here is how reasonable, tempered and procedural the US military's Americanization procedures were during World War One compared to the brutal methods of enforcement subsequently used in secular, civic, US society of the 1920s (the Klan, the Black Legion, among others). The actual grievances over which World War One was fought in Europe were hardly solved. WW1 didn't end war; it was a rehearsal for the next one. But on home ground the US military force grew more coherent, reasonable, and tolerant. Possibly a final flowering of the Progressive Era? What did Universal Military Training (UMT) achieve? UMT proponents argued it should have three positive effects. It would Americanize the immigrant, nurture US business values of service and efficiency, and help to overcome the class antagonisms that occasionally hobbled American society. Then it had a two-fold expectation ("Arguments for Universal Military Training" 1918; Kennedy 2004, 145 ff).

Its defenders imagined the young Massachusetts Apollos of the grand academies—the Episcopal Groton School and St. Marks Preparatory—partaking of the same pup tents with "boys from the slums of Philadelphia"; so would each gain by developing an enhanced and "different attitude toward the other class"—as if their US Army experience would be a grand, glorious, egalitarian Boy Scout jamboree (Kennedy 2004, 146).

But UMT opponents argued it'd make the state an "overlord" that compels "its citizens, instead of inducing them willingly to give" (Literary Digest 1917, April 21) The anti-establishment establishmentarian Amos Pinchot (1873–1944) when writing to American labor union leader Samuel Gompers in May 1917, argued that there was a deep, insidious purpose behind this newfangled UMT. For beneath:

> the cry that America must have compulsory service or perish, is a clearly thought-out and heavily backed project to mould the United States into an efficient, orderly nation, economically and politically controlled by those who know what is good for the people. In this country so ordered and so governed, there

> will be no strikes, no surly revolt against authority, and no popular discontent. In it, the lamb will lie down in peace with the lion, and he will lie down right where the lion tells him to (*New York Times* 1917, March 13, 4).

A third option was provided soon after the war by John Dos Passos in *Three Soldiers* (1921). John Andrews, one of the novels three protagonists, went to war to loose himself. War freed men to be nobodies. While his division watched a movie, Andrews watches them. He has the epiphany:

> Waves of laughter or of little exclamations passed over them. They were all so alike, they seemed at moments to be one organism. This is what he had sought when he had enlisted, he said to himself. It was in this that he would take refuge from the horror of the world that had fallen upon him. He was sick of revolt, of thought, of carrying his individuality like a banner above the turmoil. This was much better...to humble himself into the mud of common slavery (Dos Passos 1932, 22).

A vision strongly reminiscent of the very end of King Vidor's movie *The Crowd* (1928), when ordinary John Sims fades into nonentity status in the movie theater. Or of the oft attributed but never sourced Goethe quote: "Know thyself? If I knew myself, I'd run away." In a larger, philosophical sense, here's the Hegelian master-slave dialectic at work. One has to be one or the other. People choose.

To Americanize

To join the American military in the USA's World War One era was only one of many ways a man, a foreigner, a non-American, might try to Americanize. Marriage wouldn't work. Attorney General Grant Fellows (1865–1929, Republican), Michigan's fourth-ranking official and the state's chief law enforcement officer, declared in June 1915 that if a woman married an alien then she first "loses by that marriage any chances she may have to vote." And secondly, due to a recent act of congress, the newly married woman would "take the nationality of the husband, when he is an alien and she is an American" —

and thereby forfeit all her attendant duties, rights, and privileges as a US citizen. Nothing unusual here. This was common practice among Western states at the time ("Woman Cannot Vote", *Detroit Free Press* 1915, June 24, 18; Smiths 2006, 476–492). It followed a principle that stretched back to at least the European Middle Ages: *Cuius regio, eius religio*—"Whose realm, his religion"; the religion of the ruler (the husband in this case) was to dictate the religion of those he ruled (the wife in this case).

Then there were the US citizenship application procedures practiced back then. The law was hazy at first. Information was not evenly and clearly distributed; but Detroit's immigrants generally understood that it took a non-American about five years to get US citizenship papers. This was complicated by a procedure that demanded the applicant to produce at least two US citizen witnesses who had known the applicant for five years. But if the applicant had moved around because of employment, which was not uncommon, this was not a feasible demand. Which made it no less a requirement.

Soon employment itself became steadily more difficult. As the First World War approached more jobs were provided by way of US, state, county or city government. Then by late November 1915 the US Supreme Court upheld the New York anti-alien labor law of 1909 that made it compulsory to employ only US citizens in the construction of public works. Which set practices for a lot of what was done nation wide. Particularly in conflict here in the 1915 US Supreme Court case was the employment of Italian laborers in construction work. It made no difference that the Italians were on "our side" in the conflict, fighting against the forces of Austria-Hungary (as brilliantly detailed in, for example, Hemingway's 1929 semi-autobiographical *A Farewell To Arms*). But, of course, all non-US laborers were affected by this stern decision ("Alien Labor Law", *Detroit Free Press* 1915, November 30, 13).

Another method used by the foreigner was to adapt to America by custom, if not by law. To fit in by adopting native ways, to go native—yet try to maintain one's own culture or religion. Thus Detroit's Jewish community of Temple Beth El at that point in time, under the leadership of Henry Ford's friend Rabbi Leo M. Franklin, did not meet on the traditional Jewish Sabbath Saturday but held "Sunday school" and had Sunday services. Likewise Franklin was adamantly opposed to the creation of any Jewish, Zionist homeland in Palestine schemes. As far as Franklin was concerned, born in heartland America Indiana, America itself was homeland for the Jews. Who needed another? Meanwhile the hopes and plans for a Jewish home state in Palestine

were encouraged and expressly underwritten by Henry Ford's only son Edsel Ford; whose wife Eleanor and he also strongly supported all local Jewish charities for people settling in Detroit. They saw no contradiction in doing this. Detroit's Jewish community itself was divided? So support the whole community (Dean 2018b; Baldwin 2003).

Literature and Film

Turn to American literature and film of the era and they paint a disturbing picture of what happened to concepts like "loyalty", "service", "honor", "country" and "pride" when they became material realities used as formative tools for individual, cohort, and nation building. In creative public language note how the word "service"—The *Selective Service*—mingled the bitter and sweet. The phrase used to initiate and characterize conscription in WW1 United States a unit of: *chosen*, *singled out* and *slavery* plus *homage*, *devotion*.

A sharp, brief look at America's outstanding WW1 literature tells there is no escape from the First World War's trap of difference. Hemingway nihilism galore lies everywhere. And not only with "the Jew" Robert Cohn and the protagonist's own impotence in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). The anguish of dissimulation, discord and conflict religious, racial, national or class based. This sort of agony pervades William March's WW1 storytelling pastiche *Company K* (1933). As when German-American Private Jakie Brauer tries to grab a belt buckle off a badly wounded German soldier, a fine belt buckle, a great souvenir to show his neighborhood pals back home, that proudly declares *Gott Mit Uns*. But "when Jakie reached forward to unbuckle the belt, the little German boy screamed and cut his throat from ear to ear with a knife, which he had hidden under his tunic!" (March 1989, 78–80).

Difference glares out with the German-American and Jewish-American soldiers in John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* (1921). As when one Jewish-American young private tells his fellow soldiers they are cannon fodder, "meat for the guns". And his company's reaction:

> "Everybody looked at him angrily.
> 'That goddam kike Einstein,' muttered someone.
> 'Say, tie that bull outside,' shouted Bill...

> 'Fools,' muttered Einstein, turning over and burying his face in his hands" (DosPassos 1932, 42).

Or one finds a downtrodden difference, and resilience. As in e. e. cummings' profoundly hard, delicate, humane portrait of a WW1 CO in his 1931 poem about a tough Swedish-American conscientious objector: "i sing of Olaf glad and big"—with the work's ringing lines: "there is some shit I will not eat" and "unless statistics lie he was / more brave than me: more blond than you" (cummings 2018).

Movies offer other possibilities. *The Big Parade* (1925) is neither anti-war nor pro-war. If anything, it's a tragi-comedy about American soldiers as helpless schmoes, three Norman Normals of the time caught up in their nation's war machinery and how the time shapes their character and hurts their souls. Clean-cut, upper-class American hero James "Jim" Apperson buddies with Slim the Swede and Bull the Irish Barman. This movie is a powerhouse of feasible typology, eugenics on parade. (It's a narrative of a kind that was also brilliantly served in the era by US World War One veteran Alden Brooks, 1882–1964, in his remarkable novel about World War One as experienced by six different nationalities *The Fighting Men* of 1917.) *The Big Parade*'s refrain "This ain't such a bad war" is given the lie when only Jim makes it home alive. He lives crippled, sure, but gets the loser's prize when re-united at movie's end with the delightful heroine, the sexy farm girl Melisande (*The Big Parade* 1925).

Is *The Big Parade* an ironic social comment or meant to be an expression of the way things are in WW1 America? Apperson lives. The lower classes die. "Let's go fishing," said the fisherman to the worm" (Brecht 1948). Opinion has been divided for 80 years. One thing is sure, like John Ford's *The Iron Horse* (1924), *The Big Parade* is close enough to the time and key event themselves to integrate the temper and meaning of the time. A precious, time capsule document about people caught up in a storm, in a story that could also be called *The Big Breaker* with the main characters helpless as chips on a wave.

Last film to note: Howard Hawks's *Sergeant York* (1941). Which is a remarkable and wholly successful revisionist piece of WW1 propaganda useful for the USA's WW2 effort. *York* is about a moral minority, not an ethnic one. Yet the story is implicitly a case study of one of the thousands who first refused to serve in WW1—mostly Protestant, mostly belonging to German denominations, and some who died for their cause—who for good reasons of their sincere articles of faith refused to serve. But Sergeant York comes around.

He takes control. This is not *The Big Parade*. His devotion to God becomes his devotion to the United States. What's the difference? The overlap is seamless. It's accomplished in the film with a slow, solid, black and white and one step at a time Gary Cooper at his best cinematic command and grace. *Sergeant York* remains muscular to this day because of Cooper's awkward, no-acting style. A film which is strikingly about an enlisted man who is both local and national, true to his indigenous peculiarity (subtext: German-American Hutterite pacifist?). And a damn good citizen-soldier. Since the real Alvin York (1887-1964) was one of the First World War's most decorated US Army soldier who killed 25 and captured 132 enemy soldiers in one go (Owens 2004).

Conclusion

Recall the burrs of race and class that were as normal for the discomfort of American life in the WW1 era as bad plumbing, dirt roads, horse apples, clouds of flies and shoddy electricity. Another thorn was the common anxiety among the indigenous white population who were worried about how the presence of large numbers of non-Anglo-Saxon peoples could lead to national degeneration. The home front of the Great War displayed how these "foreigners" in the military could earn their spurs and become America by serving the nation and their own self-interests *at the same time*. Not everyone was included in this process, such as Germans. But, in a xenophobic period, when ethnicity was considered immutable, culture was adaptable through group integrity. One groups conspicuously excluded was the Nation's African Americans. DuBois made the intriguing argument at the time that African-Americans were torn by "two warring ideals"—the unrealizable desire to be black versus to be American. They suffered a "double consciousness" and thus *lacked* the wholeness needed for identity. The African-American, argued DuBois, possessed the blessing and curse of a seventh-son:

> born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in the American world—a world which yields him no true consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others,

> of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (Du Bois 1986, 364).

Finally, World War One for America certainly created a break between generations with the earned sense of new possibilities by those who went away and made it back. The big hit song of the post-war era belted out in jazz time rhythm "How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'em Down on the Farm After They've Seen Paree?" (Donaldson, Young and Lewis 1919). Americans had cut the chord. They were no longer European immigrants. The nation and its boys had paid their dues. Even if they still belonged to the European family. As an anecdote of the time—headlined "Little Patriot" in the *Detroit Free Press*—related:

> A young boy born in America with an immigrant father was chastised for something he did wrong.
> "But," said his someone in his family, "your father has the right to whip you when you are bad!"
> The boy's eyes flashed. "I am a citizen of the United States!" he proudly declared. "Do you think I am going to let a foreigner lick me!" ("Little Patriot", *Detroit Free Press*, April 28, 1916)

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