

Democracy and War

1. Read the documents and circle unknown word. Note definitions given in class on the left
2. Complete the War's first victims are the values of democracy template on the back.
3. In a paragraph of between 50-100 words, explain why you think that total war threatens democratic values (back).

A. During World War I, U.S. Government Propaganda Erased German Culture. NPR. Robert Siegel Art Silverman. 2017

. . . After President Woodrow Wilson took the country into war he said, "Any man who carries a hyphen about with him, carries a dagger that he is ready to plunge into the vitals of this Republic when he gets ready."

"Hans Kuhnwald, the concertmeister of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, was interned; the German language was forbidden; the German-American press was heavily censored; libraries had to pull German books off the shelves; German-American organizations were targeted," Schade says, "and what happened, of course, is the German-Americans considered themselves to be good Americans of German extraction, several generations removed from the old country."

The demonization of German-Americans took its ugliest turn in Collinsville, Ill., which is now a suburb of St. Louis. On April 4, 1918, a German immigrant, Robert Prager, [was lynched](#). . . . That April night, Prager got on the wrong side of a drunken mob that accused him of spying for Imperial Germany.

"They stripped him totally naked, and they put a rope around his neck, and they paraded him down Main Street, making him sing patriotic songs," Stevens says. "And they would take their beer bottles and break them in front of him. So he had to step on the broken beer bottles, cut his feet really badly."

Prager professed his love for America and kissed the flag that his tormentors wrapped him in. Even so, he was taken to the edge of town to a hanging tree.

"The group lowered him down quickly and, you know, break his neck," Stevens says. "They hollered, 'once for the red,' and they lowered him again, 'once for the white' and 'once for the blue.' "

Pete Stehman, who grew up in Collinsville, says the townspeople didn't talk about Prager for decades, but over the years he became fascinated with the mob's crime and the town's silence. He has written a book about it.

He says that when 11 men were put on trial for the lynching, they were all acquitted. And he points out that the local newspaper wrote about the verdict.

"The community is well convinced he was disloyal," the newspaper article read. "The city does not miss him. The lesson of his death has had a wholesome effect on the Germanists of Collinsville and the rest of the nation."

Years later, in his memoir, the editor who wrote that article would call the trial "a farcical patriotic orgy."

In the anti-German hysteria of World War I, the assimilation of German-Americans was accelerated. And being a hyphenated American would mean being suspect in

nativist eyes for decades to come. NPR. Accessed on 3.12.22 at <https://www.npr.org/2017/04/07/523044253/during-world-war-i-u-s-government-propaganda-erased-german-culture>

B. Does War Cause Xenophobia? OUP. Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee. 2015

. . . In Britain, nationalism had been heightened by decades of imperial and naval rivalry with Germany. This, coupled with apprehension at surging immigration from Germany and Eastern Europe, stoked fears of the "strangers in our midst." In the crucible of war, those fears would underpin unprecedented legislation curtailing the rights of aliens who had resided in Britain largely without incident before 1914.

At 11:00 p.m. on 4 August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany One day later, on 5 August, Parliament enacted the Aliens Restriction Act, targeting the activities and movement of all resident aliens. No alien was permitted either to enter or leave Britain. In addition to being required to register at a local police station, they were barred from traveling more than five miles from their home without a permit, banned from residing in specific areas or owning firearms, and prevented from altering their names to make them more British sounding (as the Royal Family would do in 1917). The [Defense of the Realm Act](#) (DORA), followed on 8 August, giving the government the prerogative to control print media through censorship, suspending habeas corpus and imprisoning anyone suspected of interfering with the war effort or assisting the enemy.

Britain was now a "surveillance state." By the end of August 1914, and upon the recommendation of the General Staff earlier that month, alien residents of military age—those between the ages of seventeen and forty-two—from "enemy" nations such as Germany and Austria were rounded up by the police and held on suspicion of being spies. Those swept up included both long-time residents of Britain as well as relative newcomers on business or travel. Fear of spies and possible internal dissent fomented by "enemy aliens" led one extreme xenophobe to suggest that all German-born men in Britain be "exterminated." That outrageous call, plus a wave of anti-German riots throughout Britain in October 1914, prompted Britain's Liberal prime minister, [Herbert Henry Asquith](#) (1908-1916), to decide that the internment of "enemy aliens" would protect both Germans from acts of violence and the British public from any potential military danger.

The rapid round-up of “enemy aliens,” however, posed a serious problem for British authorities. Where could they quickly accommodate the thousands of suspected men? (Women, children not of military age, clergy, physicians, and men unfit for military service were exempt.) Temporary shelters, disused factories, and holiday camps were placed at the government’s disposal. Their suitability as internee housing, however, paled in the face of the rapidly increasing numbers of men to be confined. With the sinking of the British ocean liner *Lusitania* by a German submarine in early May 1915, followed by another round of xenophobic riots called the [Lusitania Riots](#), Prime Minister Asquith chose to commit to a more comprehensive internment policy, one that was intent upon establishing more permanent camps.

There are few remaining historical records detailing the existence of the men who endured life as internees from the beginning of the war until their release in 1919. Fortunately, a twenty five year-old German “alien internee,” Willy Wolff, left a handwritten German diary (later translated into English) that chronicled his arrest in September 1914, temporary confinement in a disused wagon factory, and finally, his internment in Knockaloe Camp on the windswept Isle of Man from September 1915 until 1919. . . .

Wolff was neither a criminal nor subversive. His only crime, if one could call it that, was being a foreign citizen in a country at war with his birthplace. He was a victim of the fact that the First World War provided unprecedented opportunities for states to act upon, or cater to, an already prevalent xenophobia.

2.

Value of democracy	Quote demonstrating the violation of this value	Why this quote shows a violation of the value (explanation).

3
