Politics Among Danish Americans in the Midwest, ca. 1890-1914

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During the last decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, ethnicity and religion played a vital role in shaping the political culture of the Midwest. Indeed, historians like Samuel P. Hays, Lee Benson, Richard Jensen (of part Danish origins), and Paul Kleppner argued that ethnoreligious factors to a higher degree than socioeconomic circumstances informed the party affiliation of ordinary voters. It is definitely true that some ethnoreligious groups like, say, the Irish Catholics and the German Lutherans boasted full-fledged political subcultures complete with their own press, their own political leadership and to some extent, at least, their own ethnically defined issues. Somewhat similar patterns existed among the Norwegian Americans. They too got involved in grassroots-level political activities, with their churches, temperance societies, and fraternal organizations playing an important role in modeling a political subculture. Supported by an enthusiastic Norwegian-American press, these ethnics contributed significantly to the election across the Midwest of numerous Norwegian Americans to local political office both at the township and the county level. Other Norwegian-American politicians made it to the state legislatures and some even to a governorship or to the United States Congress. Norwegian-American politicians like Knute Nelson—who was governor of Minnesota 1893-95 and U.S. Senator 1895-1923—and Andrew J. Volstead—whose name was attached to the law that introduced Prohibition to America in 1919—were to a considerable extent identified with their ethnic background.

Does it also make sense also to speak of a Danish-American political culture in the Midwest? This would at the very least require that a certain level of ethnic cohesion could be established among the Danish Americans in the Midwest sufficiently powerful to sustain colonies of Danish immigrants and networks of Danish-American institutions. Let us look into this proposition.
As far as settlement patterns are concerned, the main impression is that Danish Americans did not cluster together to the same extent as their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts. My investigation of the ethnic composition of Wisconsin's 1,654 minor civil divisions in 1905 confirms this thesis. Whereas almost one in three first- or second-generation Norwegian Americans lived in a locality that was at least fifty percent Norwegian-American, and whereas approximately one in seven Swedish Americans lived in a locality that was at least fifty percent Swedish-American, only one in fifteen Danish Americans lived in a locality that was at least fifty percent Danish-American. In Wisconsin, in other words, Danish Americans were more scattered in their settlement patterns than Norwegian or Swedish Americans, a result that is confirmed fully by Torben Grønegaard Jeppesen's recent demographic-statistical survey of life among Danish Americans between 1850 and 2000. Despite this relative dispersal, however, Danish Americans did still cluster together to a larger extent than, say, people of English or Irish heritage. Moreover, some Danish Americans definitely sought actively to create Danish-American ethnic enclaves, resulting in the establishment of such Danish-American colonies as West Denmark and New Denmark in Wisconsin, Eklhorn-Kimballton in Iowa, and Dannebrog in Nebraska.³

Another important parameter of ethnic cohesion is the existence of ethnic institutions, such as churches, temperance societies, and fraternities. As far as religious matters are concerned, according to the not too reliable statistical information available on church attendance the Danish Americans were far less active than either the Swedish Americans or Norwegian-Americans. My own rough estimate suggests that whereas nearly one in two first- or second-generation Norwegian Americans was a church communicant who in 1900 affiliated with a "national" Lutheran ecclesiastical organization, and whereas the corresponding figure for the Swedish Americans was one in five, for Danish Americans the figure was only approximately one in fifteen. Since not all people attending church service were communicant members, the actual number of church goers was probably significantly higher.⁴ Even though these figures hardly are fully reliable, they do nevertheless express a clear
tendency: The Danish Americans were distinctly less involved in ethnically defined religious activities than their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts, a circumstance also noted by some contemporary observers. Even though the lower level of religious activities among Danish Americans may to a certain degree be ascribed to the fact that Denmark in the second half of the nineteenth century was a more urbanized society than either Norway or Sweden—based on the thesis that the churches enjoyed a more powerful presence in the countryside than in the cities—the main reason for this phenomenon is, simply, that the Danish Americans were more dispersed in their settlement patterns across the Midwest than their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts. To be sure, some Danish Americans affiliated with Norwegian-American churches whose language, after all, came close to the Danish. Indeed, some Danish-American church pioneers—most prominently Pastor Claus L. Clausen—were very active within Norwegian-American religious life.6

Besides the churches Scandinavian-American ethnics were free to participate in a welter of other ethnic activities. Thus, Norwegian and Swedish Americans nurtured a strong temperance movement. Judging from the available source material, however, Danish Americans did so to a far lesser extent. This would seem to reflect that in the Old World the Danish temperance movement, successful as it was in some regions, was no real match for its booming Norwegian and Swedish counterparts.7 In a historical review of temperance activities within Scandinavian America, Waldemar Ager, a leading Norwegian-American prohibitionist, even noted that he had never heard of a Danish-American temperance association.8 Indeed, in Omaha, Nebraska, a Danish-American anti-prohibition league came into being, a type of organization that was quite common among German Americans.9 Even though there are good
reasons to presume that Danish-American members of the Inner-Mission United Danish Church were drier at the personal level, overall, than the Grundtvigian members of the Danish Church, there is no doubt that Danish-American temperance activities generally were a mere shadow of Norwegian- and Swedish-American.\(^{10}\)

Within at least one area of ethnic activism, however, Danish-American associational life truly flourished. The Danish-American fraternities—offering sickness and funeral relief, as well as a welter of social activities, to their members—were a real match for their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts. Discussing life in Danish America, the Danish-language *Folkets Avis* (*The People's Paper*) of Racine, Wisconsin, asserted rather boastfully in 1903, "A huge number of Danish churches and schools have arisen over there," adding with somewhat more accuracy, "and the Danish Brotherhood has evolved into a chain that connects almost all the Danish colonies in North America."\(^{11}\) According to a Norwegian-American observer, "...if the Danes are rather indifferent to churchly matters, they have a tendency to come together and enjoy the social life."\(^{12}\) Similarly, two other observers suggested that one reason that the Danish Americans had not been overly active in establishing churches, schools, and, a Danish-American literature was "that they have turned their energies in other directions, especially towards organizing and maintaining secular societies."\(^{13}\)

Several Danish-American fraternities existed side by side. One was Dania which was established in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1877 and which besides supporting "sick and needy members" featured a song and theater association, as well as a library containing 2,000 volumes. When Holger Drachmann, the Danish writer, visited Racine in 1900, he was celebrated in Dania Hall where "'The Girls of [German-occupied] Southern Jutland' crowned him as the bard of cheerfulness."\(^{14}\) By far the largest Danish-American fraternity was the Danish Brotherhood. Established in 1881 by veterans of the Danish-Prussian wars of 1848-50 and 1864, the fraternity was originally named De danske Vaabenbrødre (The Danish Brothers in Arms). Already the following year, however, it changed its name, and from 1883 it was accompanied by Dansk Søstersamfund (The Danish Sisterhood).\(^{15}\)
Besides offering health insurance and funeral coverage, the Danish Brotherhood arranged many social activities on an ethnic basis. In 1896, members of Lodge number 89 in Superior, Wisconsin, thus met every first and third Friday of the month, and on special occasions the lodge arranged picnics featuring such activities as running contests and dancing. In 1902, the Racine lodge sponsored a festival with two musical bands playing Danish songs and two professional wrestlers offering robust entertainment. Moreover, the lodges from Racine and Kenosha participated in a tug of war competition, with the Racine brethren winning the coveted prize which "they immediately converted into liquor, generously treating and refreshing the losers with it so that they would not all have to go home as invalids."  

The membership information that the Danish Brotherhood itself provided strengthens the impression that we are here dealing with a strong organization, for are we to believe the figures, the Danish Brotherhood in 1907 boasted no fewer than 17,173 members and 255 lodges. Those lodges existed in largest numbers in Nebraska, Illinois, and Iowa, respectively. Are we to trust these figures, the Danish Brotherhood thus had a somewhat larger membership than the United Church and a considerably larger membership than the Danish Church. Indeed, taking into consideration that membership of the fraternities was all-male, whereas membership of the churches was mixed, almost twice as many men participated in the fraternities as in the two competing Danish-American churches combined. It should also be noted that whereas the Danish Brotherhood boasted slightly more than 17,000 members in 1907, the largest Norwegian-American fraternity, Sons of Norway, reported just about 8,000 members in 1910.

A glance at the Danish-American press leads us back to the overall Scandinavian-American pattern: Judging by available circulation figures, the Danish-language press was much smaller, relatively speaking, than the Norwegian-American or Swedish-American. Whereas total Norwegian-American newspaper circulation added up to a size in 1900 that corresponded to 40 percent of the Norwegian-American population (first- and second-generation
immigrants), and whereas the equivalent Swedish-American figure was 43 percent, the Danish-American was just 14 percent.21

Even though the exact numbers remain open to question, there can be no doubt about the overall pattern: Danish Americans lived more scattered than their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts, and, with the important exception of the fraternities, the Danish-American network of ethnic institutions was not as fine-masked as the Norwegian-American or Swedish-American. Did this translate into weaker Danish-American representation in politics?

There is no doubt that some politicians were indeed elected to political office on the basis of strong support from a specific ethnic group. This was the case particularly at the local level. The existence of political tensions between clusters of Scandinavian Americans and their Yankee neighbors are well-documented, and at times such strain indeed led to political mobilization of the ethnic group.22 Moreover, reader letters to the Scandinavian-language press in the United States indicate that many a political candidate for elective office was supported by representatives of his ethnic group. Such letters were very numerous within the Norwegian- and Swedish-language press, and now and again missives in support of Danish-American candidates also were printed.23

In 1894 a correspondent writing to the Norwegian-language Skandinaven of Chicago supported a Danish-American candidate for the office of treasurer in Dane county with the following arguments: Mr. Hanson is, as mentioned above, a Dane by birth; the Danes make up a very significant portion of the county's Scandinavian population; Norwegian and Danish here mesh perfectly, both in politics and business, in church matters, etc. The Danes—and Mr. Hansen in particular—have for years continually and loudly supported every Norwegian Republican running for office, large or small; but no Dane has yet occupied an office here in Dane. Under these circumstances, is it not fortunate that the Norwegians now have a good chance to reciprocate?24

Another reader letter printed in the same paper two weeks later, however, criticized exactly the same political candidate: "He is Danish, but he would like to be—German."25 Thus, the ethnic
argument could be employed both to support a political ally and to smear a political opponent.

If we assume that politicians were frequently elected to local or county office for ethnic reasons and to state or federal office with strong support from the ethnic press, did Danish Americans stand a real chance of being heard when recalling that their network of ethnic institutions was coarser than that of the Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans?

An examination of the ethnic makeup of Wisconsin's 100-member lower house of the state legislature, the Assembly, between 1891 and 1914 gives a rather surprising result. Among the 1,200 seats up for election between 1890 and 1912, a considerable proportion was occupied by Danish immigrants, even though they constituted only 0.8 percent of the state population in 1900. Whereas the Norwegian Americans constituted 3.0 percent of the population and occupied 32 of the 1,200 available seats in the Assembly, the Danes occupied fully 31 seats. The Swedish Americans, on the other hand, occupied just two seats, even though their proportion of the immigrant population amounted to 1.2 percent. Although the Danish immigrants only made up 0.8 percent of the Wisconsin population, in other words, they represented fully 2.6 percent of the legislators in the Assembly.

It would seem, however, that ethnicity played a more limited role for Wisconsin's Danish-American politicians than for their Norwegian- and Swedish-American colleagues. This becomes apparent from an investigation of the ethnic composition of the legislators' individual districts. It turns up that to a far lesser extent than their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts Danish-American politicians were elected from districts boasting a large proportion of Scandinavian-American voters. Thus, more than 70 percent of the Danish immigrants in the Assembly were elected from districts that were less than 20 percent Scandinavian-American. Only 40 percent of the Norwegian-American members of the Assembly were elected from such districts, and none of the just two Swedish-American.

Another factor is also important: For reasons that are difficult to establish precisely, Danish immigrants were re-elected to their seats
in the Assembly more frequently than their Norwegian-American colleagues. The 31 "Danish-American" seats in the Assembly were in reality occupied by only 16 individuals, whereas the corresponding 32 "Norwegian-American" seats were occupied by fully 26 individuals. In other words, the Danish-born politicians were re-elected to the Assembly more often than the Norwegian-born. The average length of the Danish immigrants' tenure in the Assembly was 3.9 years, whereas that of the Norwegian was 2.5 years. The fact that the Assembly careers of Danish immigrants were of a longer duration than those of the Norwegian immigrants was probably not caused by ethnic factors.

A closer look at Danish-American electoral behavior likewise implies that relatively larger shares of Danish-American politicians were elected to political office for reasons other than ethnicity. The fact is that whereas Republican-dominated single-party political subcultures emerged among Norwegian Americans and Swedish Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century, a similar single-party subculture appears to have been largely absent among the Danish Americans. Analyses of voting behavior in a very few Danish-American ethnic enclaves support this contention. They indicate that Danish Americans, quite unlike their Norwegian- and Swedish-American counterparts, supported the two main political parties in approximately equal proportions.29

The extent to which Danish-American voting behavior at least within the Danish-American enclaves was dictated by religious considerations remains unclear. It is obvious, to be sure, that strong tension existed between members of the Danish Church and the United Danish Church, and that each denomination interpreted the concept of "Danishness" in its own way.30 We should note, however, that even though the Grundtvigians of the Danish Church were usually associated with stronger ties to nationalism and to the Danish
language than the Inner Missionaries of the United Danish Church, it was nevertheless P. S. Vig, an Inner Missionary, who authored a sizable portion of the most important—and strongly filiopietistic—contemporary work on the Danes in the United States, Danske i Amerika (Danes in America, 1908). Indeed, in 1895 the same Vig claimed, "If anyone asks me whether I wish Danishness to be retained in America, my answer is a strongly heartfelt, yes, indeed." 31

Three independent analyses of Danish-American voting behavior in the Elkhorn-Kimballton settlement in Iowa do not provide a cut-and-dry answer to the question of whether grassroots level religious conflict led to political disagreement. To the extent that such political dispute did arise, it appears to have happened at a rather late point in time, i.e., in the years 1912-16. At that point, as it appears, Danish Americans of Inner Missionary background tended to support the Republican Party whereas Grundtvigians to a larger extent voted Democratic. 32

The strength of the Democratic Party among Danish Americans in general can definitely not be ascribed to the Grundtvigians exclusively. By far the largest Danish-language newspaper was the secular Den Danske Pioneer (The Danish Pioneer) which according to one observer "entertained a certain Platonic love for Socialism," and which sometimes attacked the Lutheran pastors for getting involved in politics—besides being banned from Denmark between 1896 and 1898 for its hostile attitude towards the king and the government under J. B. S. Estrup. During the early 1890s, this paper supported the agrarian, radical People's—or Populist—Party, and from the mid-1890s the Democratic Party. 33 As far as Wisconsin is concerned, Den Danske Pioneer only rarely discussed political matters there. The paper was published in Omaha, Nebraska, and judging by the relatively few surviving issues, its main geographical orientation was west of Wisconsin.

Overall, Danish-American politicians were weakly represented by the ethnic press. The Inner-Missionary paper Danskeren that was published in Neenah, Wisconsin, only discussed politics to a limited extent and then usually from a Republican standpoint. 34 Folkets Avis (The People's Paper) which was published out of Racine, Wisconsin,
usually retained a politically neutral stance. On a very few occasions, however, that paper would support local Danish-American candidates for political office. Thus, when Danish-American Peter Bering Nelson ran for mayor of Racine in 1902, the paper stated, "We may also hope, by the way, that the Danish population will disregard party loyalties and all as one vote for a fellow national who has honored the nation while never forgetting that he is Danish."36

The Danish Americans elected to the Wisconsin Assembly were a rather diverse lot of people. Of the 31 seats occupied by Danish immigrants between 1891 and 1914, four belonged to Socialists. These seats were all occupied by one and the same person, Frederick Brockhausen, who was elected to the Assembly four consecutive times between 1904 and 1910. He was a very prominent figure within the powerful Socialist movement of Milwaukee. In 1910, that city both elected a Socialist mayor and elected the first Socialist ever to the U.S. House of Representatives. Milwaukee, however, only housed relatively few Danish Americans. Most of Wisconsin's Danish-American industrial laborers dwelled in neighboring Racine which did not boast a powerful Socialist movement. Above all, Milwaukee Socialism was a German-American phenomenon, dominated by skilled German-American laborers (whereas its influence originally was much smaller among the city's fast-growing population of unskilled Polish laborers).37 Another two of the "Danish" seats in the Wisconsin Assembly were occupied by James Larsen of Menekaunee. In 1891 he was elected to Wisconsin's lower house as the lone member of the state's diminutive Union Labor party. Thirteen years later he was elected to the Assembly once again, this time as an Independent. Of the remaining twenty-five seats in the Assembly, one was occupied by a Democrat, the rest by Republicans."38

It would seem that at least some of these Danish-born Republicans became involved in a Norwegian-dominated Scandinavian-American political culture, rather than a purely Danish-American. This was definitely the case with Henry Johnson, Wisconsin's most prominent Danish-American politician. Johnson, who was involved in Wisconsin's lumbering industry and also owned a farm, was
elected to the Assembly in 1902 and re-elected in 1904 and 1906. He quickly formed an alliance with some of the state's leading Norwegian-American politicians who, in turn, constituted a central part of Wisconsin's Progressive reform coalition under the leadership of the charismatic Robert M. La Follette. Johnson appears to have been a real power among Danish Americans in Wisconsin. When Norwegian-American Andrew Dahl ran for the governorship in 1914, an ally of Dahl suggested that Johnson be persuaded to travel to Racine in support of Dahl's candidacy. Dahl liked the idea, writing a letter to Johnson in which he praised him as the politician in Wisconsin who best knew how to deal with the state's Danish population element.

We must emphasize that Johnson's political strength, his popularity among Danish Americans notwithstanding, had as much to do with his cooperation with several Norwegian-American politicians, notably Andrew H. Dahl. Indeed, the two worked closely together as a political team. When Andrew Dahl was elected state treasurer in 1906, he appointed Henry Johnson assistant state treasurer. When Henry Johnson himself was elected state treasurer a couple of years later—an election marking the culmination of his political career—he reciprocated by appointing Dahl his assistant state treasurer.

To conclude, the fact that Wisconsin's Assembly boasted a surprisingly large Danish-born element would seem to result, largely, from several Danish-American politicians being elected to the lower house of the Wisconsin legislature in spite of their ethnicity rather than because of it. Being Danish-American did not in and of itself constitute a particularly impressive political asset, but neither was it in any significant way a drawback.

The impression that the relative success of Danish-American politicians in Wisconsin should not be ascribed primarily to ethnic factors is affirmed when comparing the Wisconsin scene with politics in neighboring Minnesota where Danish-born politicians played a much more marginal role. Thus, in 1899 the lower house of Minnesota's state legislature contained fully thirteen Norwegian-born politicians, five Swedish-born, and just one Danish-born. If the Danish-American political success in Wisconsin was to be
explained primarily by ethnic political mobilization, why was it not repeated in Minnesota, which in 1900, after all, housed a somewhat larger Danish-American population than Wisconsin in both absolute and relative terms? 43

Quite symptomatically, whereas the earliest Norwegian- and Swedish-American members of the U.S. Congress—politicians such as Norwegian-born Knute Nelson and Swedish-born John Lind—were strongly identified with their national backgrounds, Charles W. Woodman of Chicago, the first Danish-born member, was not, at least not to the same extent. A Norwegian-American paper characterized him in the following manner:

He is 'one of the boys.' We remember him as the Justice of Peace at Desplaine St.; when the brothels of the district were cleared, the Prostitutes would always bring 'change' for Woodman and in court greet him with salutes, such as "Hello Charlie!" And Woodman let them get away with a quarter of what the police judge had fined them. 44

Returning to the question of whether it makes sense to speak of a Danish-American political subculture in the Midwest, the answer can at the very most be a very hesitant 'yes,' referring first of all to the situation in the not very numerous Danish-American ethnic enclaves. The Danish-American institutional network was much less fine-masked than its Norwegian-American and Swedish-American counterparts. Still, a number of Danish-American politicians did succeed in jumping on board a Scandinavian-American—rather than a purely Danish-American—political bandwagon. In this way they did sometimes participate in ethnic political networking activities of sorts, but in and of itself the Danish-American component never sufficed for political success beyond the local level.


3 To be precise, 29.2 percent of Wisconsin's Norwegian Americans dwelled in such ethnic enclaves, whereas the corresponding figure for the Swedish Americans was 14.9 percent and for the Danish Americans 6.5 percent. For the English Americans the figure was 2.3 and for the Irish Americans 0.4 percent, cf. Jørn Brøndal, "Etniske enklaver i det amerikanske Midtvesten," 1066: *Tidsskrift for historie* 29:2 (1999), 8. Torben Grønegaard Jeppesen *Danske i USA, 1850-2000 – En demografisk, social og kulturgeografisk undersøgelse af de danske immigranter og deres efterkommere* (Odense, 2005). On Danish-American attempts to create ethnic enclaves, see Jette Mackintosh, *Danskere i Midtvesten: Elk Horn-Kimballton bosættelsen 1870-1925* (Copenhagen, 1993); Torben Grønegaard Jeppesen: *Dannebrog på den amerikanske prærie: Et dansk koloniprojekt i 1870’erne – landkrøb, bygrundslæggelse og integration* (Odense, 2000); Henrik Bredmose Simonsen, *Kampen om Danskheden: Tro og nationalitet i de danske kirkesamfund i Amerika* (Århus, 1990); A. Bobjerg, *En dansk Nybygd i Wisconsin. 40 Aar i Storskoven* (1869-1909) (Copenhagen, 1909).

4 By communicant members we here mean active members who had gone through the Lutheran confirmation ritual. According to the sources quoted below, around 1900/1906 the Danish-American Inner-Mission oriented United Church boasted 16,340 communicant members whereas the Grundtvigian oriented Danish Church had just 4,000 communicant members. At the same time, the Danish-American population (first- and second-generation immigrants) added up to 308,488 individuals. This results in a communicant membership percentage of 6.6. The corresponding Norwegian-American figures were 353,435 communicant members, a population of 787,836, and thus a communicant membership percentage of 44.9. The Swedish-American figures were 148,446 communicant members, a population of 1,084,842, and thus a communicant membership percentage of 13.7. My calculations are based on the following sources: Hugo Söderström, *Confession and Cooperation: The Policy of the Augustana Synod in Confessional Matters and the Synod's Relations with other Churches up to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* (Lund, 1973), 94; United States Bureau of the Census, *Special Reports, Religious Bodies, 1906, Part 1: Summary and General Tables* (Washington, D.C., 1910), 288-290, 371-373, 529-531; O.N. Nelson, "Statistics Regarding the Scandinavians in the United States," in O.N. Nelson, ed., *History of the Scandinavians and Successful Scandinavians in the United States* vol. 1 (Minneapolis 1900), 263; Peder Kjølhed, "Den danske, evangelisk-luterske Kirke i Amerika fra 1871-1901," in P.S. Vig, ed., *Danske i Amerika*
(Minneapolis and Chicago 1908), 112; United States Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census of the United States,* 1900, Vol. 1: *Population,* Part One, 810-811, 818-819, and 826-827. Kristian Hvidt, *Flugten til Amerika eller Drivkrafter i masseudvandringen fra Danmark 1868-1914* (Århus, 1971), 315-316, using information from the Danish-American Pastor A. M. Andersen around 1900, sets the total Danish-American communicant church membership at slightly more than 41,000, i.e., a figure twice as large as my own estimate. But Hvidt likewise found that religious activities were most widespread among the Norwegian Americans, with the Swedish Americans taking second place and the Danish Americans third place. The very high percentages Hvidt reached were calculated on the basis of first-generation immigrants only. See also George R. Nielsen, *The Danish Americans* (River Forest, Illinois, 1981), 12-13, and 82-83. For a more generous estimate of Swedish-American church membership, setting the Augustana Synod membership alone at 19.4 percent, see Dag Blanck, *The Creation of an Ethnic Identity: Being Swedish American in the Augustana Synod* (Carbondale, Illinois, 2006), 32.


For a comparative analysis of the Danish and Swedish temperance movements, emphasizing the role that home-grown Grundtvigianism played in hampering Anglo-American religious influences in Denmark, see Sidsel Eriksen, "Vækkelse og afholdsbevægelse: Et bidrag til studiet af den svenske og den danske folkekultur" *Scandia* 54: 2 (1988), 269 and 274-275.

8 Waldemar Ager, "The Norwegian-American Temperance Movement," typewritten manuscript (1936), p. 1, box 2, in *The Papers of Waldemar Ager,* Norwegian-American Historical Association. Actually, a Danish-American temperance association did exist in Waupaca, Wisconsin, even though a Scandinavian-American observer noted that the level of activity among Danish Americans was less impressive than among the Yankees."A.C." to *Skandinaven,* Chicago, September 20, 1890.


10 On this difference between Inner Missionaries and Grundtvigians, see Jette Mackintosh, *Danskere i Midtvesten,* 111-112.

11 *Folkets Avis,* Racine, February 26, 1903, Wisconsin Historical Society.
12 "A.C." to Skandinaven, Chicago, September 20, 1890.
14 Folkets Avis, May 17 and 24, 1900.
16 Folkets Avis, July 17, 1902.
17 Folkets Avis, July 17, 1902.
19 Cf. footnote 4 above.
21 My calculations based on N.W. Ayer & Son’s American Newspaper Annual (Philadelphia, 1900), 1411-1413, which gives the circulation figures that the press itself reported. According to my calculations total Danish-American newspaper circulation added up to 42,937, Norwegian-American to 31,288, and Swedish-American to 461,866.
22 For Norwegian-American examples, see Merle Curti, The Making of An American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier Community (Stanford, 1959), 12-13, 96, 318-326, 334; for a Danish-American example, see Torben Grønngaard Jeppesen: Dannebrog på den amerikanske prærie, 241-244.
24 "S" to Skandinaven, August 15, 1894.
25 "Idus Martii" to Skandinaven, August 29, 1894.
27 Information on the ethnic background of the Assemblymen, as well as other biographical data, is provided in The Blue Book of Wisconsin 1891, 571-605; 1893, 619-661; 1895, 657-695; 1897, 652-700; 1899, 743-795; 1901, 721-769; 1903, 1069-1112; 1905, 1065-1123; 1907, 1115-1177; 1909, 1083-1146; 1911, 727-786; 1913, 629-689.
28 I calculated the ethnic composition of each Assembly district by pairing information of the geographical makeup of each district (which varied from election to election) with data on the ethnic composition of each township in 1905 according to the typewritten manuscript, "A Retabulation of Population Schedules from the Wisconsin State Census of 1905," Madison, 1940, 11 volumes; vol. 6, "Table 26. Number and Distribution of Family Heads by Nativity and Minor Civil Divisions," Wisconsin Historical Society.
29 Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture, 70.

31 P.S. Vig, "Lidt om Danske og Danskhed i Amerika," in *Danskeren*, Neenah, Wisconsin, April, 18, 1895, Wisconsin Historical Society. In the same article Vig, who apparently wished to nip accusations of not being sufficiently nationally minded in the bud, wrote that he would in fact be ashamed of himself if he did not understand the English language; "But I will never be able to love it as I love my mother tongue. I cannot help this, but that is simply how matters stand, and I do not wish it to be any different! Thus: I wish that Danish will be retained in America. It is my wish that my children shall be able to think and speak in Danish and be Danish." Furthermore, Vig ventured that continued Danish immigration to America would contribute to keeping Danishness alive. "But above all the church will be the great, yes the greatest, preserver of Danishness in America."


33 Cf. *Danskeren*, November 8, 1894; August 13 and November 5, 1896; November 17, 1898.

34 Cf. the editorial in *Folkeets Avis* October 29, 1896, in which the paper refused to take a stand on the defining issue of the 1896 presidential election, the question of whether or not to coin silver.

35 *Folkeets Avis*, April 21, 1902.


38 We may add that two of these Republicans, Christian Wellengard and Ferdinand Wittig, were saloonkeepers by profession, whereas none of the Norwegian- or Swedish-born members was.

39 Herman L. Ekern to Lily Ekern, January 16, 1903, the *Papers of Herman L. Ekern*, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

41 Andrew H. Dahl to Herman L. Ekern, June 27, 1908, the Papers of Herman L. Ekern; Henry Johnson to Otto Krenze, letter placed under the date of September 7, 1914, in the Papers of Henry Johnson, Wisconsin Society of History.


43 According to the Twelfth Census of the United States, Vol. 1, Part One, Wisconsin boasted 16,171 Danish-born immigrants in 1900, Minnesota 16,299; in Wisconsin they constituted 0.8 percent of the total state population, in Minnesota 0.9 percent.

44 The paper Scandia quoted in the paper Reform, November 20, 1894. Reform suggested that, "If the following information from "Scandia" is trustworthy, it would be better for the nationality if he had stayed at home." See also Millard L. Gieske and Steven J. Keillor, Norwegian Yankee: Knute Nelson and the Failure of American Politics, 1860-1923 (Northfield, Minnesota, 1995); George M. Stephenson, John Lind of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 1935).