

## Chapter 1

# A German-American Movement

## *Critical Opponents*



Having discussed the typical gendered nativism of US-American feminists in my introduction, I will now focus on German-Americans' resentment toward the US-American women's rights movement. This case of German-American opposition centers on the figure of Mathilde Wendt, owner and editor of a German-language paper devoted to the cause of women's rights, *Die Neue Zeit (NZ)*, who took part in the founding of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*. In words as well as in deeds she was at the center of a German-American oppositional women's rights movement in New York City during the 1870s, and represented a critical voice against the US-American women's rights movement. The case of Mathilde Wendt and the New York German-American feminists allows us to gain insight into the strategy of ethnic division and to inquire about the causes and aims of such a strategy.

At the age of 20, Wendt, née Neymann, arrived in New York on 5 October 1848, together with her mother Harriet and two younger brothers, Emil and Adolph.<sup>1</sup> They apparently joined their father and husband in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a place which in the 1850s became a flourishing ethnic center of German-American culture. There, Mathilde married Charles Wendt. Her husband had immigrated to the United States from Berlin, arriving with his family on 10 August 1841. Neither family appears to have been political refugees, or Forty-Eighters; it seems likely that they left Germany for economic or other reasons. Immigration records list Wendt and the other adults in the two families as farmers. Family ties also linked Wendt to Clara Neymann, who became her sister-in-law through marriage to Emil Neymann.<sup>2</sup> Little is known about Wendt's husband, Charles, or the fate of the family, who seemingly suffered from economic hardships that also might have restricted Wendt's public political activities and personal freedom.<sup>3</sup> There is evidence that her husband engaged in activities of the German *liberal-republikanischer Verein*, a freethought and reform association connected to the American Liberal Leagues.<sup>4</sup> Censuses after 1870 no longer listed a person by the name of

Mathilde Wendt, yet we know that she continued public work in New York. For example, her name appeared in the reports of a Ladies Protective Health Association in New York from 1885 until 1891.<sup>5</sup> The censuses further indicate that Wendt bore four children, and that one daughter, Alma, who was born in 1859, apparently died in early childhood. Her other three children were Emma (born in 1852), who, in 1873, was one of the first female students to graduate from Columbia College in New York according to *HWS*, Arthur (born in 1853), and Edmund, called Edda (born in 1856).<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the fate of Wendt's family could not be established beyond this information.

As to her engagement in the women's rights movement, I have established that Wendt served as a member of the NWSA executive committee for New York in 1884 and as an honorary vice president of the NAWSA for New York between 1893 and 1919. Despite this and the fact that she was elected NWSA delegate to the 1873 International Congress in Paris, she never spoke at any of the US-American women's rights movement's conventions, nor did she publish in any of the English language women's rights papers. It is very unlikely that she did not speak English well enough. Only in one instance was her short letter of greeting read at a women's rights convention, the International Council of Women (ICW) in Washington DC in 1888.<sup>7</sup> Wendt's engagement in the women's rights movement was sporadic and passive. Instead, she represented a particular German women's rights movement in the United States, in opposition (or in addition) to the existing US-American movement. Before I elaborate on Wendt's case, let me illustrate a discourse that is fundamental for understanding Wendt's critical position in the women's rights movement.

### **Imagining Opposition to Nativism**

When speaking about nativism and German-American opposition to it, it seems feasible to look more closely at US-American women reformers' reasoning and their propounded stereotypes. One—although retrospective—judgment can be found in the insider's history of the suffrage movement in the United States written by Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Shuler.

These authors traced the repeated defeats the movement had suffered from 1869 to 1920 in different state and national campaigns. The divide between US-Americans and immigrant communities figured prominently among the elements they blamed for these defeats. Their master narrative concluded that "there had been hours for the Indian, the Russian, the German, the Chinese, the foreigner, the saloon, hours when each had decided the limits of woman's sphere, but no woman's hour had come" (1969, 127). Catt and Shuler listed

ignorance and corruption as mutual characteristics of all these immigrant groups. Germans were incited by the American Brewers' Association, an interest group of the liquor trade, to not vote for women suffrage in Nebraska in 1882 because it would have meant prohibition (1969, 111–12). Russians in South Dakota in 1890 were depicted by Catt and Shuler as simultaneously illiterate and corrupt because instead of pursuing their own interests in elections they became mere puppets of the saloon keepers:

South Dakota permitted foreigners to vote on their first papers, and there were 30,000 Russians, Germans and Scandinavians in the State.<sup>8</sup> Thousands had been there from six months to two years only. These men, unable to read or write in any language or to speak English, were boldly led to the ballot boxes under direction of well known saloon henchmen, and after being voted were marched away in single file, and, within plain sight of men and women poll workers, were paid for their votes. (1969, 116)

These two feminist “historians” used nativist prejudices and categorizations in their narrative as a structural element in tracing the steps women had taken to win the vote and the defeats women had continuously suffered. Their narrative was staged to culminate in the suffrage movement’s final goal of the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Accordingly (and for strategic reasons), they presented women as the last group in society to achieve their rights, long after “less valuable” groups received theirs.

It cannot be doubted that the relationship of women’s rights reformers to different ethnic groups and interest groups influenced election outcomes and that these special relationships mattered. A particular constellation of reciprocal perceptions and stereotypes along ethnic boundaries informed collective behavior and created a general atmosphere of hostility between US-American women’s rights proponents and ethnic communities. This hostility at times could not be superseded, and even among those non-Americans who were in favor of women’s rights, it instilled a desire to form an alternative women’s rights movement parallel to but independent of the US-American women’s rights movement. The relationship between German-Americans and US-American women’s rights reformers was of a specific kind, particularly because the Forty-Eighters were generally interested in public affairs and in political reform, and thus in participating in these discussions. It is not my aim here, however, to trace German-Americans’ voting behavior and their actual lifestyle. Rather, I am interested in the images of that lifestyle others held, which formed public opinion, evolved as stereotype, and influenced how women’s rights reformers thought about immigrants, as well as how immigrants perceived the women’s rights movement.

The first mention of a separate German-American women's rights movement can be traced to a series of articles in Karl Heinzen's *Pionier*, which appeared in 1868 and 1869 and, among other things, a lengthy and detailed convention report. This convention of German women in Roxbury (near Boston) was opened by their president, Ida Johanna Braun, who stated the following:

Dear attendants. I would have never dreamed of having this privilege today because I have never dreamed of the possibility that the German women of this country, whom one never saw but in the beer gardens and never heard of but in the mockeries of men, would demonstrate such an active participation in public matters, particularly in the questions that we are about to discuss here in assembly. (*Pionier* 1868, 16 December, 4)

Braun's opening remarks leave no doubt that this demonstration of interest in public issues, particularly women's rights, was unexpectedly large in the German-American community. The convention lasted for three days, and the participants not only discussed the necessity of women's emancipation, but also of forming a German women's rights movement in the United States to oppose the preexisting US-American women's rights movement. The reasons for this split of the movement along ethnic lines (and no longer along gender lines) were explained in speeches and discussions about the resolutions. Together these offered a sustained German-American critique of the US-American women's rights movement.

Before I look at this critique, a general remark about this particular source—the convention report—seems in order. It was published in the *Pionier* between 16 December 1868 and 31 March 1869 in a series of sixteen articles. From the fact that the article appeared without attribution of an author we can assume that the article was written by the editor of the paper, Karl Heinzen himself.<sup>9</sup> No other paper (*WJ*, *FD*, regional German- and English-language daily press) provided an account of this convention, although the *Pionier* presented it as an outstanding historical event. The names of the participants in the audience and on the podium appear—with minor exceptions that I will point out in the course of my analysis—in no other documents, and indeed are those of fictional characters. Ultimately, during the course of my research, I discovered half a sentence in the *FD* which revealed to me that the “Konvention deutscher Frauen” had actually been an invention: “If they want to gain not only the sympathy but the strong help of all friends of freedom, the women must take up that point of view which Karl Heinzen assigned to them in his report about the ‘Teutsche Frauenconvention in Frauenstadt’ (which unfortunately only took place in his fantasy)” (*FD* 1882e). Except for sugges-

tions in the text itself, this was the only hint I could find that both the report and the convention were fictitious. Moreover, the purported president of the convention was introduced by the name of Julie vom Berg, which was one of Karl Heinzen's pen names (Blaschke 1997, 356). The identification of Berg with Heinzen is important to note, as the character's role during the convention was that of the critical commentator and interpreter of resolutions and oppositional arguments. In this character's comments we are presented with Heinzen's commentary and opinion, which would have been obvious to contemporary readers of the fictional text.

Textual evidence for the fictional composition of the report includes satirical elements, exaggerations, and a "happy ending." One of the male opponents of women's rights was named Herr Schuerze (Mr. Apron) and was introduced as "a smug gentleman with the face of a fox, whose diplomatically sarcastic demeanor expressed his confidence that he would greatly abash the ladies. He was a politician from the West and considered himself a great statesman" (*Pionier* 1869a, 3 February, 2). The resemblance of this figure to the German-American senator of Missouri, Carl Schurz, was obvious. Another male opponent, Dr. Blüthe, was presented as a grotesque figure, who, when woken from a state of "trance" by a loud noise, immediately rose to proclaim confused phrases. In order to hear his true opinion about women's rights, the convention decided to put him back into a state of trance to interview his subconscious. Heinzen's text brings to light this man's corrupt and opportunistic nature. He parroted the ideas of his employer and did not give his own opinions. This episode ended with the flight of Dr. Blüethe from the hall screaming, "Heinzen's comedies!" (*Pionier* 1869a, 10 February, 3–4). In satirical fashion, Heinzen, as the author of this piece of fiction, used this figure to ridicule his "enemy," Gustav Bloede, the coeditor of the conservative German paper the *New York Demokrat*. According to historian Carl Wittke, such disgraceful feuds between editors characterized German-American journalism.<sup>10</sup> In the characters of Dr. Blüthe and Herr Schuerze, we clearly see Heinzen's critique of German-American political and intellectual leaders. The rhetorical mode of the satire even enhanced this critique as it increased the distance between the ridiculed and the ridiculer and thus set Heinzen clearly apart from the represented editor.

The last example of the fictional nature of the text is the "happy ending" of the convention report. Its structure is that of a fairy tale or colportage novel, in which everything ends well in terms of dominant moral standards: the women of the convention were invited by the regional all-male German-American radical club to a dance. They only accepted the invitation, however, on the condition that the women be allowed to dress as men and vice versa: "The new order of things proved excellent all night and everybody agreed that they had

never before enjoyed and amused themselves so much on such an occasion.” The ending established yet another “new order of things”—the relationship between US-American and German women, which was at the center of the convention in Roxbury:

A few attending American women were of the opinion, however, that the atmosphere at a German women’s convention would be much more humane and gemuetlich than at an American one, and they declared their resolution to promote the former. By the way, among the men in attendance no one received more accolades than the Turner Schwartenbach. His main award, however—if we may gossip—was his engagement to Miss F. from New York, the most beautiful and charming girl of the entire circle. (*Pionier* 1869a, 31 March, 4)

The fictional character of the “Konvention teutscher Frauen” does not diminish but indeed enhances its value for my inquiry into the mutual perceptions of Germans and US-Americans. Fiction does not have to comply with the existing social order and is freer to enter into utopian and fantastical realms. In doing so, I conceive fiction as a comment on reality or as a vision of reality; it can become a subversive act within the present “order of things”—both its creative imagination and reception.<sup>11</sup> The present example functions as a comment on the historical relationships between German-American and US-American women, the differences between the ethnic groups, and the necessity of establishing a strong German-American women’s rights movement against the existing US-American movement. The figures taking part in this imagined convention appear as types and stereotypes of German and US-American women and men. They not only represent different political positions and different worldviews, but also—and this is the particular value of fiction—an evaluation of these positions. The ways in which the figures were introduced (e.g., Herr Schuerze), interacted with each other in dialogue, or left the scene (e.g., Dr. Blüthe), were dramatically composed and reflected the author’s values.

Two female figures were at the forefront of the convention, the president Ida Johanna Braun and Julie vom Berg. The latter engaged in discussions during the convention and countered the male opponents’ arguments, while Braun gave speeches at the beginning and end of the convention. The fundamental perspective of this convention and the reasoning behind a separation from the US-American women reformers were explicated in Braun’s opening speech. First, she argued that it was the duty of German women in the United States to act in solidarity with US-American women reformers, as the rights they were fighting for would also benefit them. It would be a shame to merely receive the right to vote as a gift, “like slaves that were given a right as a bonus”

(*Pionier* 1868, 16 December, 4). It was a matter of honor, in her eyes. Her second argument for German women's commitment to women's rights derived from her perception of US-American women:

I predict that, if women are granted the right to vote, the political party that seeks to limit the freedom of social life by moral police and seeks to expand the authority of the clerics by religious coercion will be significantly strengthened. What it has not achieved so far, it will conceivably achieve now with the help of American women who are generally more dependent on the representatives of religion than American men. This party's goal will be achieved if those women's additional votes are not made powerless by a pull in the opposite direction. And who shall and will provide this pull? Only the German women! (General Applaus.). (*Pionier* 1868, 16 December, 5)

The image established by Braun of the religious and pious US-American woman whose actions were guided by the clergy joined the women's rights movement with the Christian temperance movement. This was a fatal link, as the temperance movement was disliked by the majority of Germans in the United States for its restrictions of individual freedoms and social customs, such as the consumption of alcohol.<sup>12</sup> The moral stance of the temperance movement derived its legitimacy from Christian, particularly Protestant, ethics of work and worship. Leisure and activities associated with it, such as enjoying a meal and drink, or talking and smoking in company and other informal socializing, ran counter to such principles and were therefore considered illegitimate. Rather, time not spent working should be spent worshipping.<sup>13</sup> The leisure activities mentioned above, however, were deeply ingrained in the German lifestyle. Germans brought with them to the United States a particular beer hall culture: they installed breweries, joined choirs and music clubs, and established a distinctive "festive culture" (Conzen 1989, 45–46). Conzen suggested that German ethnicity from the 1840s onward was intertwined with the emergence and proliferation of the specific German *Vereinswesen*. *Vereine*—voluntary associations—offered ways of liberating the individual from traditions and realizing the humanistic belief in progress and cultivated life (*Bildung*). Together with like-minded individuals, this kind of self-improvement could be achieved in social reform, art, and learning. In accordance with the humanistic assumption that humans possess both sense and sensibility, and live in practical as well as aesthetic and emotional worlds, *Vereine* combined cultures of learning and education with cultures of cozy sociability and friendship—*Geselligkeit*. Braun's critique proposed that this cozy sociability, which had become the epitome of German community life in the United States, was at risk of being eliminated. Moreover, the opposition against the clergy

that she put forth hinted at the intellectual and political position from which she was speaking, that is, that of the freethinker. This position could be found frequently in Heinzen's *Pionier*, for example also in an article "Deutschamerikaner und Frauenstimmrecht," in which "know-nothingism, bigotry and temperance" were mentioned as three issues which annoyed the Germans (1869b). So, while Braun in the report accused US-American women of being dependent on the clergy and Biblical dogmatism, German women were established as the exact opposite, free and independent, representing humane, liberal, and democratic principles. Theirs was the standpoint of universal humanity and universal human rights. In the course of the convention, a pastor's offer to say a prayer to open the proceedings—as was good custom everywhere—was repudiated by a woman who clarified: "I have not prayed ever since I began to think" (*Pionier* 1868, 16 December, 5). Emancipation from religion—from the clergy in particular—characterized the ideal German woman.

The German woman in Braun's speech was represented as the only counterweight to illiberal temperance politics. What about men? Braun argued that German men could be totally at the mercy of US-American women, who would use their ballots to install temperance politics and thereby restrict German liberties. It was German women's ballots that could override or support temperance politics. German women could take "revenge" on German men by boycotting elections in general. German men, Braun claimed, subjugated them based on a separation of gendered spheres instead of supporting the cause of gender equality and equal opportunities to pursue individual freedom. Braun said:

Should we let them [the German men] down? We want to come to their aid, not out of generosity but in order to help in securing justice and freedom. In order to be ready for that it is necessary to appear on the battle field early on for training and practice. In assisting the German men in their fight against temperance tyranny and religious fanaticism we also have the best opportunity to demonstrate to American women an example of intellectual freedom and to express our gratitude to them for already having preceded us in the struggle for political freedom. (*Pionier* 1868, 16 December, 5)

According to this appeal, the differences between the Germans and the US-Americans involved the dichotomy of "intellectual" and "political," that is, the dichotomy of theory and politics, of passivity and activity. In her farewell address, Braun referred to this dichotomy once more, this time, however, pertaining to the differences between women and men: women were traditionally classified as the "passive accessory" and as such considered as the opponents of the male half of humanity. But now, women appeared as agents in the public



and political realm, thereby becoming men's new rivals and their "hostile antagonists." Up to this point, history had charted a continuous struggle of men against each other.

The following demonstrated a new perspective, Braun proposed: "It is a divorce of the two fitting halves of humanity—600 million women confront 600 million men, so as to assert, at first only through representation of a small number of pioneers, that they are humans as well" (*Pionier* 1869a, 31 March, 3). "Braun" applied this dichotomy of passivity and activity in order to describe two unrelated axes of differences. On the one hand, she used it to illustrate the ethnic differences between Germans and US-Americans, and on the other hand it supported her image of gender differences. As the two speeches bracket Heinzen's fictional convention report, they suggest a parallel link between gender and ethnic differences. Consequently, the ethnic differences between US-Americans and Germans paralleled the difference between men and women. Following this logic, Germans were feminized and subjugated by the masculine element (US-Americans). They were as inferior as women were in relation to men, in the contemporary gender order.<sup>14</sup> However, as the women's rights movement proved, women rose to action and left behind their associations with passivity. Accordingly, with regard to the relationship between German and US-American, this legitimized the Germans' claim to power, just as the women had a legitimate claim to power. The proposed new order would be one in which the formerly passive and subjugated elements would wake up to rebel against this exclusion from an active and powerful position. The exposed position of German women in the United States stemmed from this logic, according to which German women had a dual task. It was incumbent upon them to free themselves from two intersecting roles: their passivity as women and their passivity as Germans.

Heinzen's made-up resolutions represented the consensus of his fake convention, since they were prepared and introduced by a committee and then discussed, altered, and adopted by the entire convention community. As such, the resolutions of the "Konvention teutscher Frauen" represented the consensus of these German women. Opposition to the resolutions was uttered by individuals representing the standard arguments of the time. Julie vom Berg, as a member of the committee of resolutions, responded to all criticisms and in all cases extinguished the argument—dramatically illustrated by the departure of the opponents from the convention scene. In the following my interest lies in the supposed consensus among German-American women and in the supposed antagonistic arguments against their position. I understand this fictional representation as a specific German-American position that included dominant—that is, typical—perceptions of social groups and their political and cultural interests.

According to Berg, the resolutions sought to illuminate questions and issues otherwise neglected in US-American women's conventions. The central difference between German women and their US-American counterparts was the former's repudiation of religion. This issue, however, did not evoke opposition as it was presented as a mutual consensus. Controversy erupted, however, around the question of marriage reform. The importance of marriage derived from the notion that it was a foundation of human social existence in the cooperation of both sexes. Accordingly, as the backbone of democratic society and as an institution to advance mutual happiness, marriage should be understood as a relationship between two sovereign and free individuals; because it was a contract freely entered into, people should be free to dissolve it as well. This ideal of a free partnership should also be reflected in the sharing of property in marriage. In case of divorce, property should be divided equally between the partners. Another fictional convention attendee, Johanna Fuchs of Buffalo, criticized the idea of shared property in marriage. In her eyes this would endanger wealthier women, who would then no longer be able protect their property independently. Moreover, it would lead to an increase in the number of divorces, as people would take advantage of this practice in order to "make money." Therefore, Fuchs demanded the separation of property.

Berg commented on Fuchs's critique. First, she clarified that in putting forth this demand for community of property one would have to consider, too, the need for a generally improved society, where such wretched behavior and the possibility of betrayal no longer existed. But above all, Berg opposed the separation of property as it contradicted the principle of love. "How could the relationship of two lovers who lead a life together and see the same spirit grow again in their children agree with the calculating mind of a businessman or lawyer who keeps books about his dollars and her dollars? Heinous dissonance! Odious contradiction! ... A financial partition wall must necessarily also create a moral one, a partition wall of emotions" (*Pionier* 1869a, 3 February, 3). The separation of property would lead to a separation of emotions and, therefore, she claimed it contradicted the ideal of romantic love.

This issue, however, was not merely an issue of love versus partnership. The controversy also touched on ethnic positions and illustrated German perceptions of US-American women, with the latter presented as materialistic and incapable of true love and marriage. The reforms of married women's property rights that had been enacted since 1848 in the different states had indeed expanded women's rights to control their own earnings during marriage and allowed them to remain in control of their individual property.<sup>15</sup> The differences, drawn along ethnic divisions, that Berg's comment established assigned the qualities of love and devotion to the side of the Germans, and the lack of these same emotional characteristics to the side of the US-Americans, who repre-

sented the material world, economic interests, and business. In this instance, introversion served as a German female feature superior to the extroversion of the prototypical US-American female character. Again, the dichotomy between “passive” and “active” served to distinguish women belonging to the two ethnic groups. If, as I argued above, we consider this dichotomy as a gendered one, it is also evident that German women’s rights activists—at least in Heinzen’s fiction—work to defeminize US-American women, while they see themselves as remaining true to their feminine “nature.” Passivity and emotionality epitomized femininity and were embodied by German women in the United States, who were therefore destined to represent women’s interests in a particular German women’s rights movement in the United States. They became active in order to preserve their femininity as emotionality.

The analysis of Braun’s speeches and of the debate between Fuchs and Berg illustrates the central structures of the text and the power grid that kept gender and ethnic positions in flux while at the same time reaffirming them. One further point of interest, however, is the depiction of German men. German men constituted a group of voters against which the US-American women’s rights reformers continuously fought, and against which nativist prejudices were raised. Therefore, the depiction of German men by a German man, Heinzen, is telling.

The first man on the scene of the convention was introduced as “Editor.” He represented a German-American journalist of supposedly few intellectual qualities, as indicated by the language he spoke, which was a gibberish composed of both German and English words. The women criticized him, saying “here, we speak German.” This silenced him. The second man was the Pastor Goetzling, who offered a prayer to the convention. After the resolutions were read, Herr Backfuss from New York appeared on the platform. He reminded the convention of the fact that equal rights also required equal duties. As long as women did not fulfill the highest duty of defending the country as soldiers, they were not entitled to the highest right of voting. Berg responded to this argument that women had participated as nurses, cooks, etc., in wars, and therefore fulfilled their duties as well. But above all, she stressed the inhumanity of war and instead argued for pacifism. Violence as a means of solving political problems was outdated and no longer had a place in the new social and political order. The argument was defeated and Herr Backfuss left. Herr Schuerze, the politician from the West, claimed that the entire question of women’s political rights was a theoretical question, because in reality no majority, not even of women, supported it. Berg responded to this argument as well, and compared the women’s rights movement to the abolitionist movement, explaining that the latter had also been a movement of a minority and yet had not been illegitimate or of minor importance. The

ones who were free had fought for those who had not been free. Men as free citizens should, therefore, support the liberation of women, who were not yet free. Finally, Herr Gerstaecker<sup>16</sup> warned the women that they would also lose their privilege of being treated gallantly by men, for example, by being offered a seat on a crowded train. What these men have in common is an opposition to women's rights. Their different arguments represented the variety of (German) male voters' positions.

To summarize, structurally, the convention report reflected new boundaries in the women's rights movement in the United States. By considering not only the hierarchical relationship between women and men, but also the hierarchical relationship between Germans and US-Americans in the United States, the Roxbury convention introduced a new axis of difference and replaced the male-female divide, which traditionally characterized the women's rights movement. The desired political divide ran along ethnic lines and brought about separate German and US-American communities in the women's rights movement. While the transverse new division was overtly visible, further levels of meaning were attached to it, as I have shown. The binaries woman/man and German/American were enriched by the dichotomy of passive/active; the intersections of these terms helped create social and political hierarchies, attaching positive value to the position of German women and devaluing US-American women. In the relationship between German-Americans and the women's rights movement, this dichotomy remained prominent. Rhetorically and metaphorically, it served to differentiate the two ethnic groups and to justify the political claims of women and Germans. In this work of fiction, the position of the German woman was elevated to the most powerful and significant position in the context of the women's rights movement in the United States. But how powerful did this position prove in reality? I will investigate the realization of this imagined discourse of opposition by looking at the case of New York's *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* and Mathilde Wendt's activities.

### **Mathilde Wendt's Powerful Words: *Die Neue Zeit***

What was implied in the *Pionier's* fictional report of a German women's convention finally took place, in real life, in March 1872 in New York City, where a *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* was founded.<sup>17</sup> This association represented a German-American women's reform network in New York, which found an outlet in the German-language paper *Die Neue Zeit*, (*NZ*), edited by Mathilde Wendt. Unlike the *Pionier*, the *NZ* did not unambiguously oppose the US-American women's reform movement. The articles reveal ambivalent

dual strategies for gaining support in both otherwise antagonistic camps. As far as the writers were concerned, US-American feminists should realize that Germans were not entirely against women's emancipation, while the German population in the US should, in turn, understand the validity of radical egalitarian politics. In any case, the paper was welcomed by the established *New Yorker Staatszeitung* as a "new fighter for equal rights" (1869a) and thus clearly placed in the reform community.

The weekly German reform paper *Die Neue Zeit* was published in three volumes between 25 September 1869 and 15 June 1872 in New York. Wendt was editor in chief and owned the paper, together with F. Labsap,<sup>18</sup> from September 1870 until it closed down in June 1872. Wendt relinquished the paper to Labsap after a year-long struggle with him over some obscure differences. Labsap then continued it as the Sunday issue of his other paper, *Oestliche Post*, in St. Louis.<sup>19</sup> With Wendt's departure from the editorial team, the *NZ* lost its character as a public advocate of women's rights among German-Americans. The slogan "Equal Rights for All" codified the paper's platform and its central goal, the propagation of women's rights, as was also explained in the first issue's editorial:

All humans are born equal and are entitled to the same rights. Man and woman stand on the same level before the law and must necessarily enjoy the same rights; and if all rights find their realization in the suffrage, if without suffrage they are only acts of mercy, then it must be irrefutably clear that the right to vote must be granted to women, in order to secure the position which justice and their intellectual capacity assign to them. (Das Comite 1869, 1–2)

The equality of women and men and cooperation between nations were considered principles of the republic. Just as politics in a republic should aim at establishing and preserving the welfare of the people, the same egalitarian principles of the state presumably would filter as ordering principles into people's social lives, family organizations, and workplaces. The editors considered the right to vote as a means to those ends as well: it synthesized all natural rights and was, therefore, the right of all humans. The *NZ* served as a public organ for such an egalitarian discourse of universal rights.

In the absence of correspondence between the editors or the publishing house and the sources pointing out the composition of this German-American circle in New York, this chapter concentrates on the discourse of women's rights as it materializes in the paper: Who constituted the paper's audience? What did writers for the *NZ* say about women's rights and about the women's rights movement? In what ways did the US-American and German-American discourses differ or overlap? In focusing on these issues we can evaluate the

*NZ* as an example of the antagonistic relationship between German-Americans and the US-American women's rights movement. The formation of an exclusive public of German feminists in the United States, therefore, implied separation and opposition.

Firstly, who read the *NZ*? The new paper attracted about five hundred to six hundred subscribers after its first year of existence, as Wendt indicated in a letter to Heinzen on 12 April 1872 (KH Papers).<sup>20</sup> This rather small audience is indicative of the general sentiment against women's emancipation in the German-speaking community in the United States. The editors' estimation of their audience revealed their thinking about the educational and emancipatory goal on which this public organ focused. The paper aimed to emancipate women, particularly German women in the United States, who were considered dependent and subjugated by their husbands. To the surprise of the editors, among the readers were also many women; how many exactly, we do not know. German women's interest in the *NZ* was perceived as a sign of German women's emancipation and independence. Accordingly, the editors were enticed to conclude:

It appeared to us that our paper was not as necessary as we had thought when we founded it, and with amazement and delight we see that the German women in America, of whose dependence we have had so many accounts, are not at all averse to the general progress, the improvement of their own and their fellow sisters' situation, and that the German men, at least in the circle of the family, grant their women equal rights. Then suddenly, one after one another, three letters of cancellation poured in, however, not sent by the women who had subscribed our paper directly, giving their own addresses, but by their masters and rulers. . . . Our paper is a necessity after all! (*NZ* 1869b)

It was the stated principle of the paper to make German women visible and heard, and now they did make themselves heard. In fact, the *NZ* as an enterprise rested in the hands of women. The title design of the paper—an ivy-framed figure of *Justitia*, Roman goddess of justice and law, on a pedestal with the slogan "Equal Rights for All"—was a woodcut by Alice Donley and Laura E. Bower. The editors argued that these women exemplified the potential of female artists for excellence: "If practical proof were required that the female sex is as capable of excelling in all professions as the male sex, if the path to those weren't cut off from then, then the female artists and female physicians who compete with the artists and physicians for the laurels in New York today would provide more than enough evidence" (*NZ* 1869a). Not only did women fill the creative posts, the sales of the paper were handled by the female-led advertising agency "Volkmann, Smith & Co, General American, German

and French Advertising Agency.” The *WJ* commented: “Miss Volkmann is a blonde young beauty from the land of Bismarck; Miss Smith is a Virginia Lady, despoiled by the late war; and Mrs. Wendt is a Juno from Faderland, with flashing eyes and raven hair. . . . They are assisted by eight nimble-footed nymphs, and employ only the gentler sex” (*WJ* 1870b). The editors pursued and realized not only the ideal of giving women a voice but also providing them with equal employment opportunities.

Produced by and for women, the *NZ* was a significant outlet for the German-American discourse of women’s rights reform. Wendt authored three prominently featured series on women’s rights entitled “Die Frauenfrage” (The Woman Question), “Die Frauenrechtsbewegung” (The Women’s Rights Movement), and “Kurze geschichtliche Uebersicht der Frauenrechtsbewegung, in Europa und den Ver. Staaten von Nordamerika” (Short Historical Overview of the Women’s Rights Movement in Europe and the United States of North America). The following considerations evolve from my analysis of these texts and epitomize the specificities of the political discourse among German-American women.

The first series, which discusses the “woman question,” intended to present the historical development of the social and political position of women, which, Wendt argued, had always equaled that of the slave. Wendt argued that now was the time to demand women’s emancipation in the family, state, and society. Besides narrating women’s situations in different cultural and historical contexts, she addressed a common argument among women’s rights opponents that women were superstitious, vain, jealous, and unjust in their relationships with other women. Wendt argued that these characteristics and “hereditary defects” (*Erbfehler*) were remains of the past and needed to be contextualized historically. Women’s public existence over the course of history had been justified solely on account of their bodily existence, while being denied any influence in the family or over the affairs of state. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that women sought to advance their physical attraction and beauty, as this would under such radically unjust conditions have also increased their individual value. Vanity (*Putzsucht*) led to superstition and lies, which, however, necessarily had to develop in the character of women, because they became their only weapons in fighting brutish and forceful men. Wendt concluded: “These so called ‘hereditary defects’ of the female sex, vanity and cruelty against their own sex, are, as we saw, no natural defects but have developed consequently out of the first conditions of human society, when raw violence and brutality of the strong sex could only be repelled by the cunning and slyness of the weak sex” (Wendt 1869a, 10 November, 116).

Until this point, such an explanation of women’s character was uncommon among German-Americans and US-Americans. Before her, the German

journalist and educator Amalie Struve, who was living in exile in New York City after the revolution in the German states, repeatedly argued against the *Putzsucht* of US-American women, contrasting it to the practicality and virtuous character of German women.<sup>21</sup> In the German-language paper *Sociale Republik*, Struve wrote: "Vanity and an exaggerated love of luxury completely control American women. . . . In the oppressed Europe you find a greater simplicity and true love of art among the women and daughters" (1859, 2). Struve condescendingly characterized US-American women by attributing to them a passion for finery, beauty, and luxury, thereby providing the case for Wendt's later interpretation. Wendt, however, did not ethnicize the image of the vain woman. In historicizing the image, she turned it into a universal characteristic of femininity that could be changed once women were regarded as people in their own right beyond their bodily existence. Wendt's different point of view was derived from her deeper integration in the US-American culture.

In addition, Wendt's special interpretation demonstrates the characteristic strategy of the German-American women's rights movement in New York. By founding a separate ethnic movement, they pursued a dual strategy of reaching a German public in the US through advocating women's rights, while simultaneously seeking an audience in the US-American women's rights movement to alter the nativist image of Germans. The *NZ* apparently did not intend to reinforce antagonisms between German and US-American women. The supposed female characteristic as articulated by Wendt applied to all societies in which women gained their value in the family (as bearers of children) and in society (as decorative elements of a male partner), based on their physical attraction. Unlike Struve, Wendt participated in the German-American community and the US-American women's rights movement. Much like Anneke or Neymann, she was situated in a hybrid position between those poles. In deconstructing the image of the US-American woman that dominated Struve's writings, Wendt weakened the established polarization. She avoided ethnic stereotyping and condescending attitudes, presenting instead a transethnic image of women's historical situation that applied to Germans, US-Americans, and other Westerners alike.

While Wendt put forth a universal position supporting the idea of "universal sisterhood," she and the *NZ* also criticized the US-American gender order. She contrasted it to a German gender order, confronting considered falsities with references to institutional differences between states or with a socialist standard of equality. The latter was the case in Wendt's second essay, entitled "Die Frauenrechtsbewegung," which discussed women's emancipation as a step in the direction of social justice. The demand of social justice evolved as a typical element in German-American women's rights discourse. Women's emancipation was an issue of social justice, not a moral or merely



political question. The battle for the premise that equals should be treated equally was waged in the arena of work: women should be paid equally for their work. This in turn required that women have the same educational opportunities as men, so that they are qualified for whatever job they aspire to. While the US-American context demanded women's rights on the foundation of their citizenship—which then required equal treatment protected in the constitution—Wendt's arguments established a sacred right to work—"ihr heiliges Recht an die Arbeit" (Wendt 1869b, 4 December, 127). In practice she demanded that women have the freedom of choice in work and equal opportunities in education. This would guarantee women's independence, particularly as more women than men lived in modern societies and, for various reasons, had no opportunities to marry and be provided for by a partner. Even in marriage, a woman could no longer entirely depend on her husband, as the macroeconomic situation had changed over the course of industrialization, immigration, and urbanization: people were thus more vulnerable than in previous eras and marriage as an institution of provision (*Versorgungsanstalt*) no longer existed for a woman. Wendt argued and demanded that women become workers and citizens at the same time.

In that we [i.e., the Americans] lag tremendously behind and because the women recognized that by and large they have nothing to expect from the workers and their representatives, they threw all their strength behind their political campaign, and now want to become citizens first and then workers. And we too [i.e., the German-American editors of the *NZ*] agree that only in that manner the question will be solved quickly and to the satisfaction of the majority. (Wendt 1869b, 4 December, 127)

A dual strategy evolved of simultaneously securing women their rights as citizens and as workers. As Wendt's preferred strategy, it combined German and US-American discourses and attempted to make socialism an integral part of the women's rights discourse. This strategy prominently reappeared in the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* when a socialist revolution and social equality were established as the ends of women's emancipation, and not vice versa, as will be shown below.

In the second series of articles, two aspects of Wendt's history of the women's rights movement in Europe and the United States appear to me to be noteworthy: firstly, the tension between the pride of German intellectuals on the European and North American continents as well as the ignorance of the women's rights cause among the German population in the United States; and secondly, Wendt's biased depiction of the US-American women's rights movement, which gave more credit and praise to the branch constituting

the AWSA than to the Stanton- and Anthony-led NWSA. This unbalanced representation points to Wendt's position in the community of the women's rights movement.

Wendt claimed that, "just as in all questions concerning the progress of human society, the German mind power gives the first impulse" (Wendt 1870d, 1 January, 181). From such a statement the series launched into an overview of the historical development of the women's rights movement. Although theoretical impulses had come from German thinkers—she mentions Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel's 1774 essay "Ueber die Ehe" (On Marriage)—the French had been the first to practically intervene for women's liberation. Wendt claimed that in the United States the movement had been ignited without any prior theoretical agitation. This overture to her historical narration of the US-American reform movement, its leaders, and its institutions established a difference between the United States and Europe, between action and theory. Similarly, the speakers at the imagined "Konvention deutscher Frauen" strategically applied this dualism to legitimize their separation from the US-American women's movement. Wendt presented it as a historical truth and a generic, essential difference between Germans and US-Americans that served to elevate the German intellectuals' self-confident position in the United States above the US-American one. This application of the active/passive dualism was highly ambivalent: the Germans' intellectuality and lack of activism added to the image of the idle, lethargic German introduced above. In contrast, the US-American man and woman of action were considered more positive, because they actively advanced a course of reform. What remains is the fact that the supposedly essential difference between Germans and US-Americans was a difference between theory and action. This dichotomy was a vehicle in the German-American discourse of women's rights for making the claim for the superiority of the German element in the United States as well as to demonstrate the backwardness of Germans in the women's reform movement.

Having established a central and powerful position for Germans' contribution as thinkers and theorists to the women's rights movement, Wendt moved on to highlight Francis Wright and Ernestine Louise Rose as "foreign-born" women who had been the first speakers for women's emancipation in the United States. These two immigrant women represented further foreign elements that had groundbreaking influence in the development of the movement in the US. The ambivalence of this strong and powerful German (and foreign) position evolved in her description of the German public in the United States. Despite the Germans' role as early visionaries and theoreticians of women's rights, and despite their contribution to the US-American public discourse of women's rights, the German-American community apparently did not have

many women's rights supporters among them in 1870. As evidence, the essayist presented the fact that only four of the three hundred German-language papers and magazines in the United States advocated women's rights. Those were Karl Heinzen's *Pionier*, the *Neue Welt* of St. Louis, the *Columbia* in Washington, and the *NZ* in New York (Wendt 1870d, 26 March, 275–76). The public image of the German was that of a traditionalist, not of a reformist.

Reactions in the English-language women's rights press likewise demonstrated the need for a German-language paper that would encourage women's emancipation among German-Americans. Both *The Revolution* and the *Agitator* welcomed the *NZ*. *The Revolution* wrote: "*Die Neue Zeit* is the German paper for which we have so long been hoping" (Miller 1869). This friendly peer review continued by listing the content of the paper's first issue. The *Agitator* was more elaborate in its praise of the paper and in May 1869 announced:

In New York, a new German Women's rights paper is to be published—"Die Neue Zeit"—The New Era,—with the motto, "Equal Rights for All." The most renowned writers in German are secured for its pages, and it is to represent the special tendency of German intellectual life in the United States. There is need of this paper, for only one of all the German papers in this country is in sympathy with the movement for the elevation of woman. Most of the German papers bitterly oppose it. (1869)

In turn, Wendt was not as generous in her writing about the US-American women's rights movement. Her introduction of its leaders revolved around the person of Lucy Stone, whom she praised: "She is the only woman among the outstanding women of the women's rights party who had received a thoroughly solid education. She took the classical course at Oberlin College, the only institution of higher education that admitted girls in the day, and received an excellent diploma" (Wendt 1870d, 8 January, 196–98). Wendt presented Stone as a learned intellectual. Although she did mention other early leaders of the women's rights movement, such as Lucretia Mott, Paulina Wright Davis, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Anna Elizabeth Dickinson, Wendt presented them as speakers and agitators but not as educated women. Nevertheless, they too were learned women who had attended institutions of higher learning. Wendt clearly prioritized a German (theoretical, learned) over an US-American (activist) approach to women's emancipation.

Moreover, Wendt's ascribing of a prominent position to Stone could be read as a sign of Wendt's own position in the women's rights movement after the schism of 1868/69 and the founding of the NWSA and the AWSA. The qualifiers with which Wendt described the founding of the rival associations are telling and reveal a personal leaning toward the AWSA. First, here

is Wendt's neutral description of the NWSA: "Here, the *National Suffrage Association* was founded, which was joined by many satellite associations of the whole union." One paragraph below Wendt introduced the AWSA:

In November of 1869 a new, great association was founded whose president is Henry Ward Beecher, the *American Suffrage Association*. The officers are the women: Mary A Livermore, Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe and many others. This party primarily works in the states of New England and now has its own widely distributed and well equipped organ: *The Woman's Journal*, published in Boston and revised, set and dispatched by women. (1870d, 26 March, 276)

The latter description contained more details than her comments on the NWSA, employing favorable qualifiers such as "great" and "well equipped." The mention of the individual officers' names presented the AWSA as personal and vivid, whereas the representation of the *NWSA* remained impersonal and anonymous. Anneke also commented in a letter to her husband Fritz on the two rivaling US-American women's associations. Unlike Wendt, however, Anneke did not support the founding of the AWSA, nor did she think highly of its founders, as the following passage demonstrates. Once the AWSA was founded, she wrote to Fritz:

I do not acknowledge the After-National-Association, because a well organized National Association, founded in New York in May this year, exists, namely with Elisabeth Cady Stanton as president and vice presidents in every state (I am appointed for Wisconsin, for example.) This association holds too many radical elements so that the nativist church and temperance league could not comfortably fit in. Thus, the rift occurred. For a while the Cleveland Association will be dominating here. Therefore, the undecided and sycophants commit to it (à la Mathilde Feodowna Wendt.) Livermore is an intriguing smart politician. (Wagner 1980, 353)

Two things should be noted: in the same way that the US-American women's rights movement split into two separate societies, women such as Wendt and Anneke, despite sharing a German-American ethnic position, participated in this split and became advocates for one of the rivaling parties. The two women's different stances toward US-American feminists provides proof that these ethnic positions were not stable, but on the contrary, differed and changed through processes of ethnicization. Anneke, as vice president for Wisconsin, supported the NWSA and its founders, Anthony and Stanton, whereas Wendt apparently supported Stone and Livermore in their endeavor to establish the AWSA. One's position in this game of rivalry was central,

as Anneke's letter suggested, and identification in this situation also defined the position of the German women's rights reformer in the United States. The US-American reformers became—for political as well as personal reasons—figures of identification for German reformers, and the latter's choice determined their position in the German-American community, illustrating also the gaps within that community. Anneke and Wendt were apparently separated by this gap because they identified with oppositional camps of the women's rights movement. In Anneke's eyes, Wendt lost her credibility and suffered a loss of any good reputation that she might have had. In the letter quoted above, Anneke dismissed Wendt as undecided and a "sycophant."

To conclude, Wendt's narration of the history of the women's rights movement illustrated her pro-AWSA position, while she simultaneously expressed her position as a German in the United States with ethnic pride. This pride did not lead to a separation and a negation of the US-American movement, as Heinzen's "Konvention" had demanded. Instead, Wendt supported the US-American suffrage community. In claiming the theoretical and intellectual origins of the women's rights question for Germans, she rejected the stereotype that Germans sought to maintain a traditional gender order and opposed women's emancipation. Rather, Wendt's claim suggested that Germans had a tradition of emancipating thought and felt in no way antagonistic toward the cause of the women's rights movement. Like Heinzen, she still prioritized the German over the US-American position by charging the German with intellectual and theoretical force, but in contrast to Heinzen she did so from a position of basic sympathy with the US-American women's rights movement.

Not only did the *NZ* pursue the goal of giving German women a voice, but it also served the function of conveying political and cultural news to its readers. The spectrum of news was diverse. In addition to US-American political and cultural news, the paper included political news from Germany, serialized novels and literature by German- and English-language writers, and reports about the progression of the women's rights movements in the United States and Germany. The consideration of both "battlegrounds" for women's rights demonstrated that the position of the *NZ* in the battle for emancipation was informed by German thought and US-American activism.

This discourse of women's rights in the German-American oppositional public was less distinct from the US-American discourse than was imagined in the "Konvention deutscher Frauen in Roxbury." Although its leaders still marked and activated their differences along ethnic lines and although they indeed lifted the German woman above the US-American woman, the strategic reason behind it was not only nationalistic: in Wendt's discourse, the divisions within the German community in the United States and the division between German women and men and between radicals and conservatives

were the underlying reasons for the formation of a rational German-American women's rights discourse. This new discourse should help change the public image of Germans in the US-American women's rights movement. Only if Germans were viewed more positively by US-American feminists would the antagonism between the two camps cease and women's rights be enforced.

### **Mathilde Wendt's Activism: *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein***

On the evening of 21 March 1872, "no less than 2000 persons" assembled at the new Turnhalle in New York to participate in the first public meeting of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*, according to a report in the *WJ*: "The audience was essentially a German one, there probably being scarcely a dozen persons present, belonging to other nationalities" (1872). The crowdedness of the hall also featured prominently in Heinzen's *Pionier*: "Shortly past seven o'clock some gentlemen and ladies arrived to take their seats in the front rows and at eight o'clock the hall which seats nearly one thousand persons was so crowded that doors wide-open the crowd had extended to the entrance hall. Probably more than 100 persons could not enter at all" (A. 1872). The *New Yorker Staatszeitung* commented that although the "weak and beautiful gender" represented a large part of the audience, the "raw, despotic and stronger gender" dominated the audience (1872b). These introductory remarks leave no doubt that this event was of major interest to the German-American population of New York and that it was also of interest to the broader women's rights movement community, including the readers of the *WJ*. What was its significance in the special relationship between German-Americans and the women's rights movement in the United States?

Historian Mari Jo Buhle situated the club in the Socialist movement of New York and further explained that although Auguste Lilienthal "rose to prominence after this event [the founding meeting of 1872], she, like her comrades, lacked a stable constituency and could never utilize the full range of her talents and energy" (1981, 3).<sup>22</sup> Thirty years after Buhle's publication, what is known about the history of this society has not changed. It remains unclear how it developed; who its members, officers, and audiences were; and how it ceased to be an active part of a German-American women's rights movement. I discovered the final reference to this association in the *WJ* of 28 March 1874 in the form of a report of the "regular public meeting" of the German Woman Suffrage Association of New York (M.V. 1874).

The *Pionier* (1872), the *NZ* (1872a), and the *New Yorker Staatszeitung* (1872b, 1872c) featured reports of the initial meeting and the speeches that were given. Wendt, as the president of the new association, opened the meet-

ing and introduced the three speakers: Lilienthal, Clara Neymann, and Dr. Adolph Douai.<sup>23</sup> While the need for initiating a separate German women's suffrage association was not central to Lilienthal's and Neymann's speeches (Douai's speech was not discussed in the reports), the female speakers focused on the political and theoretical dimensions of women's emancipation. Like the *NZ*, with its commitment to women's rights, the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* did not negate the US-American women's rights discourse altogether; rather, it drew much of its energies from it. To the assembled members, it seemed only logical that the ethnic community of German-Americans would fulfill a destiny of safeguarding individual freedom and democracy in the United States by subscribing to women's rights. Implementing women's rights, however, became an endeavor of mediation and negotiation, not between the US-American community of women's rights reformers and the German-American community, but between the German radicals and intellectuals in the United States and the extended German immigrant population comprising farmers and skilled and unskilled workers. The members of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* sought to reach the German community, including German voters who would not have been sympathetic to US-American women's rights reformers on account of strong reciprocal stereotypes and prejudices. While a politically engaged immigrant woman might not have found it necessary to separate from the US-American community, her hybrid status and ethnic pride required her to address herself to the German community while simultaneously trying to alter the Germans' image in the eyes of the US-American women's rights movement. I will now try to highlight two central elements of the German-American women's rights movement. Firstly, the alternative discourse constituted by socialism and freethought; and secondly, the cooperation with their US-American counterparts.

In her opening speech at the founding convention, Lilienthal spoke up for women's enfranchisement and opposed the prevailing arguments against it. She argued against the assumption that because women could not serve as armed soldiers they were not eligible to citizen's rights. She opposed the fact that women's brains were supposedly smaller than men's and thus intellectually less capable. Furthermore, she spoke out against the social norm dictating that women remain in the domestic sphere. Finally, she argued against the notion that the influence of the clergy would increase once women had the right to vote. This last argument was relevant in the German-American context, as the fictional convention at Roxbury had made clear. This, then, constituted the central issue of opposition and the main factor for the division and ethnicization of the reform movements. Lilienthal said:

I believe that the power of the parsons cannot grow further, that power created by men who have made our laws until now. We want to liberate the world from the

clerics. Our religion is human dignity, love of humanity, freedom and equality! We are the ones who attack the foundation of religion, the Bible, and shatter the one of all dogmas: He shall be the Lord! Together with the Bible the entire old and rotten edifice shall go down! (*New Yorker Staatszeitung* 1872b)

The collective “we” in Lilienthal’s address remained ambivalent, neither clearly implying the German women’s rights movement inaugurated here nor the US-American women’s rights movement represented by the NWSA and the AWSA. Yet, strong opposition against religion and reference to the philanthropic religion of human rights, freedom, and equality suggested an exclusive collective “we.” To speak out against institutionalized religion and in favor of overthrowing reliance on the Bible in 1872 introduced a discourse different from the US-American women’s rights movement’s discourse on women’s rights. US-American women’s conventions’ programs, with regular prayers and religious services, prove that religious belief and a form of female piety were still valid discourses in their movement.

Lilienthal, however, presented these religious discourses as invalid and rejected them. Thus, she situated herself outside the US-American women’s rights discourse in a discourse of enlightened and philanthropic women’s rights (in the community of German-Americans). Her rejection of religion served as a doctrine, expressing her attachment to a particular discourse.<sup>24</sup> As a German-American woman, Lilienthal had to take up a discourse that differed from the US-American women’s rights movement’s discourse on women’s rights. Opposition in the German-American community to women’s emancipation primarily stemmed from the observation that the reform movement was based on and reiterated religious doctrines that were regarded as a sign of dependence and a lack of freedom. The distinct discourse of women’s rights in the German-American community, therefore, evolved from the rejection of this religiousness and the establishment of a discursive doctrine of “freedom,” “human rights,” and “equality.” These doctrines and a prohibition of religiousness brought about a German-American women’s rights discourse and resulted in Lilienthal’s ambivalent straddling of the US-American and German-American women’s rights movements. This is clear in her dual strategy, whereby affirming the particular antireligious discourse of women’s rights allowed her to reach the German-American community that would have objected to the presumed religiousness and superstition of the US-American women’s rights movement. The flip side of this strategy was not the total neglect of the US-Americans’ movement, but quite the contrary. By adhering to a doctrine that could convince German-Americans of the righteousness of a feminist reform, the image of Germans in the United States would also change within the US-American women’s rights movement. This dual strategy



was characteristic of the ambivalent position of Lilienthal, Wendt, and the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*.

In addition to the antireligious doctrine, the contents of the reported public meetings of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* display the group's affiliation with the German-American Socialist movement. Neymann, Alexander Jonas, and Mathilde C. Weil were the speakers between 1872 and 1874 who addressed socialist issues of wages, hours, and labor. I argue in what follows that the concentration on socialist politics represented the second distinctive element in the German-American women's rights discourse.

Neymann's address at the opening meeting in 1872 brought together a socialist ideal of independent work with considerations about women's education and marriage:

Once the wife is trained to work, she can also contribute to the family's provision. ... But currently the wife might have to work more than the husband and what is the outcome? The poor woman throws herself into the open arms of prostitution. Look at the pasha-like position of a house servant pocketing 8 to 10 dollars each month, and compare it to the miserable lot of a housemaid, who hardly earns the double!<sup>25</sup> Is it surprising that despite of the notorious lack of good housemaids no female being decides to work? (*New Yorker Staatszeitung* 1872b)

In her address, Neymann criticized how women received a limited education, which curtailed their options to work and taught them how to become obedient housewives. The unequal distribution of power between husband and wife contributed to the "rotteness of family life" (*Fäulniß des Familienlebens*), which she conceived as the source of the "rotten circumstances in the lands" (*verrottene Zustände der Staaten*). Subsequently, she demanded a reform of marriage. Furthermore, and most central to her argument, was her critique of women's low wages, which forced them into prostitution, another feature of social and moral "rotteness." Equality between marriage partners, equal wages, and equal opportunities in education would all lead to women's independence and ultimately to the "refinement and betterment of the human race" (*Veredelung des Menschengeschlechts*). Women's rights and suffrage in particular were elements of a much broader political (socialist) agenda.

Weil's speech at the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*'s public meeting in March 1874 centered on the question of equal wages for women and men. She presented examples of jobs in which women were paid less than men, because they were female and disenfranchised:

The administration at Washington, a short time ago, determined to lessen the expenses of the Government, and concluded to make this deduction in the Treas-

sury Department. Only a female clerk, copyist, who received \$36.46 per month, was dismissed, probably because she could be of no political service to the Administration as the male clerks are. This is another proof that women suffer by not being admitted to the ballot. (M.V. 1874)

The implied accusation in the given example was that of corruption governing Washington. As they had no political power, women counted far less in the offices of administrators; they were irrelevant because they would not be able to give their votes to any of their bosses. Therefore, Weil argued, women's work in this administrative sector was precarious because they were disenfranchised. The general precariousness of women's labor was proven as well: women, because they lacked opportunities to choose their education, had only limited options to work. The increasing introduction of machinery and industrialization affected women more than men, as they had fewer alternative work opportunities. Only the vote, educational opportunities, and equal wages would improve women's lot. Weil and Neymann saw women's rights in the context of human progress, and subsequently Weil ended her address with great pathos: "Give to Woman the highest possible development, socially and politically, open to her every field of activity; then she will not only clearly understand the questions of the time, but work according to the principles of this great Republic" (M.V. 1874).

Both women claimed women's rights as an element in their vision of socialist reform. Women's rights, moreover, served as a vehicle to achieve socialist goals. Their proximity to the socialist movement evolved as a further distinctive feature in the German-American women's rights discourse. US-American women's rights reformers such as Livermore and Anthony shared socialist goals as well, but whereas socialism functioned as one element in the emancipation of women in the US-American women's rights discourse, it evolved as the chief end of agitation in the German-American discourse, valuing as it did women's enfranchisement as one means to the individual's economic independence and social justice.

Socialism and freethought, then, were the two doctrines constituting the German-American women's rights discourse. Despite the exclusiveness of this discourse and its distinction from the dominant US-American discourse, members of both groups sought cooperation, as the following example shall demonstrate. In May 1873, the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* invited members and friends to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the NWSA in New York, and so displayed an overlap of constituents between the two associations. The invitation announced the following ladies as speakers: "Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Madame Anneke, Charlotte B. Wilbour, Matilda [Joslyn Gage, Susan B. Anthony, Clemence S. Lozier, M.D., Mathilde F. Wendt, Olympia Brown, Lillie Devereux Blake" (Das Agitations-Committee

1873). The egalitarian integration of Wendt and Anneke concealed the otherwise palpable differences between the two societies. Anneke, however, stood out in this list as she was the only woman not mentioned by her full name, but by the respectful form of address, Madame Anneke. This raised her above the others on this list and presented her as the grand dame of the movement, an honor which generally only Lucretia Mott received. Contextualizing this source in the German-American women's rights discourse, the elevation of Anneke becomes a signifier of the self-confidence the German-American discourse felt in relation to its US-American counterpart. That this was conceived rather differently in the US-American women's rights discourse can be concluded not only with reference to the deeply ingrained nativism of the movement, but also from the invisibility of the German-American movement in the US-American movement. As an entry in Anthony's diary indicated: "Tuesday, May 6, 1873. Anniversary National W.S.A. Apollo Hall—New York—Meeting good as could be with no newspaper advertising" (Gordon 2000, 606). The announcement in the German-language paper had remained invisible to Anthony and seemed to be irrelevant to her.

Whereas the Germans remained invisible to Anthony, the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* explicitly appealed to German-Americans' solidarity with the US-American women's rights movement and with Anthony in particular when she was convicted of illegal voting: "At the evening session beginning at 8 o'clock Miss Susan B. Anthony will tell the story of her trial for having cast a supposedly illegal vote. Because of its extraordinary importance of this issue, all members should attend" (Das Agitations-Committee 1873). This issue of women's attempts to vote and to register as voters was also hotly debated among German-Americans.

Another instance of the solidarity of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* with their US-American colleagues was the 1872 presidential election campaign. It coincided with the "new departure" among women's rights reformers. This label became the heading of a new strategy to gain women's suffrage, whereby women argued that under the articles of the constitution they were citizens and therefore entitled to vote. Presuming their rights as citizens, women registered to vote and then went to the polls to cast their votes.<sup>26</sup> Already prior to Anthony's case and her public trial in June 1873, female reformers had demanded the right to vote for these reasons. Wendt was among those women who attempted to vote in New York.<sup>27</sup> She wrote about it in relation to the presidential elections and the position of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*, and I will quote at length from her letter of October 1872 to Karl Heinzen:

This year, I consider the No President agitation as a disaster. It robs us of half of our radical supporters. . . . As the only [German-American] suffrage organization

in the United States we lose ground, and this seems more disastrous now that women, in a few years, will doubtlessly have the right to vote. Then, the gangs of priests and temperance fanatics will rear their hands and we Germans will no longer have any influence, since we did not help the American women and, instead of eagerly supporting them, did nothing for them. From a practical point of view, it is none of our business whether we have a president or none. ... [W]e are only political zeroes and appendages of any random man who happens to be our husband. In my eyes we and the radical men have the primary duty to turn these zeroes into numbers before we actively engage in any other kind of reform. (KH Papers)

Wendt addressed two levels here. Firstly, she explained that it was the duty of German women to support the US-American women's rights reformers, as only then would Germans be in a position to participate in political decisions. Secondly, Wendt spoke as a woman, as, in her own words, a political "zero" or nonentity. For these reasons, she considered it the responsibility of the German-Americans to support women's rights. And she appealed in particular to German-American radicals to prioritize women's suffrage over other reforms, such as the "No President" agitation Heinzen and Neymann represented in October 1872. This was an argument for more direct democracy, which opposed the pseudomonarchic institution of the presidency in the United States. According to Wendt, the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* would be fighting a losing battle, as such agitation would result in their vanishing from the political scene altogether. Exiting a political arena that women had only just entered, through their support of a presidential candidate and their attempts to vote, would have been self-destructive, and as a result the German women's rights movement would lose any political influence. Women were now engaging in party politics and thus demonstrating their fitness for political power. The German-American radicals' argument against the presidency undermined this newly gained political power for women, because it undermined the grounds on which they based these powers and thus functioned as an exit strategy for the German-American women's rights movement. Thus, Wendt argued vehemently for deferring the "No President" agitation and supporting the issue of women suffrage during the presidential campaign.

Wendt was convinced that the German-American discourse of women's rights could not function on its own and in stark opposition to the US-American movement's discourse. She argued that separation was unwise because it limited future opportunities for the participation and political influence of Germans in the United States. While German women defined themselves against what they considered to be the aberrations of their US-American co-

workers in the women's rights movement, Wendt suggested that they collaborate with each other. German-American women could thus ultimately become the redeemers of the United States in safeguarding republican principles.<sup>28</sup>

### Opposition as a Dual Strategy

Juxtaposing Heinzen's imagined German women's rights movement in the United States with the real one reveals an interesting discrepancy between the two. Whereas the fantasy stressed opposition to the US-American women's right's movement's strategies and the movement's supposed support of temperance policies, the examples taken from reality did not uphold this assumption. Instead, it built a strategy of support. Women's rights activism sought to represent a beacon to the German community in the United States, on which the German population would focus its attention and be guided by, as well as represent a beacon for the US-American women's rights movement by signaling the willingness among the Germans to reform. Nevertheless, it was necessary to remain in a separate community outside the US-American reform movement so as not to lose credibility among the German population for its opposition to the US-Americans' strategies.

Surprisingly, nativism and temperance did not feature prominently in the discourse of women's rights in New York that I have examined, although they were the central features among German opponents to the women's rights movement. These issues appeared to be "bypassed" in the *NZ* and in the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*. I argue that this "bypassing" of heated issues was a necessary strategy in helping German-American women's rights advocates fulfill their dual role of becoming a beacon within both ethnic communities. In order to avoid harming their place in either of them, a "third space" had to be invented that could function universally in all Western societies. In her historical overview of women's positions, Wendt introduced gender as a historical category that could become such a "third space." In the discourse of the *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein*, moreover, the socialist revolution filled this space.

Despite "bypassing" the US-Americans' critique of the Germans, Wendt and other New York women ambiguously reinstated the idea of German superiority. This sense of superiority rested on two foundations: first, the Germans were deemed to be intellectually advanced; second, they had a holistic vision of a socialist revolution. Taken together, these aspects confirmed their position as the vanguard of women's rights reform. In doing so they also put forth their critique of US-American reformers who, they argued, were unable to fulfill this task:

[W]e claim that once the present female leaders of the women's rights movement have reached their goal, we cannot expect any other relevant reforms. Of course, new forces will come forward, but their goals will be of various kinds and only a few will be open to socialist tendencies. Militant socialism, however, will then have lost the concentrated power of today's women's rights movement, which shares with it at least the negation of the present order, as its helping force. (NZ 1871d)

It is evident that these politically radical Germans associated with NZ and the *Frauenstimmrechtsverein* wanted to lead a socialist "revolution." German-Americans understood women's rights as one element of socialist politics and justice. The NZ argued that these higher aims were not central in the US-American discourse. This strategic and political difference legitimized the German-American women's right movement as a quasi-separate reform movement. Therefore, German-Americans, in order to secure their political and cultural influence, were called on to support the women's rights movement so that after the enfranchisement of women a socialist "revolution" could be initiated under the leadership of Germans, who represented the intellectual predecessors of socialist ideas and enlightenment thought, as stated repeatedly in this German-American discourse.

"Bypassing" antagonisms strengthened German political influence in the United States, as mere opposition was conceived as an exit strategy, something that the example of the 1872 presidential campaign showed. Despite its separation from the US-American feminist movement, the German-American women's rights movement thus also strengthened the transatlantic space in which it was situated. The *Deutscher Frauenstimmrechtsverein* represented not just one pole in a dichotomous ethnic relationship, but settled in a third space of negotiation through differentiation. I consider such a space to be a transatlantic space, as it prompted motion between the binary system of US-American and German (European) positions. The real "fantasy" of the German-American women's rights movement evolved not as a total separation and negation of the US-American movement, but materialized—although ambiguously—to support the US-American discourse. At times, and in particular with regard to the socialist "revolution" in whose debts the women's reform rested, a German ideal was established, creating ambivalences that complicated the special relationship between German-Americans and women's rights in the United States.

## Notes

1. This information is taken from ship passenger lists. In addition to this information, marriage certificates and census data have been consulted to establish a general biographical narrative.

2. Mathilde Wendt and Clara Neymann appeared to have had a complicated, even unfriendly relationship, however. Wendt wrote to Heinzen on 12 April 1872: "Unlike my sister in law Mrs. Clara Neymann, with whom I have totally broken and of course also with my favorite beloved brother, who is a plaything in the hands of his vain and corrupt wife" (KH Papers).

3. The censuses of 1850, 1860, and 1870 list Charles Wendt as a distiller and reveal an increase in his personal estate from \$7,000 in 1850 to \$15,000 in 1860. However, by the time the Wendt family moved to Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1870, the value of the family's estate had diminished dramatically to just \$1,000. In a letter to Karl Heinzen, dated 18 April 1872, Wendt mentioned that she would have to rely on and provide for herself in the future (KH Papers), and in a prior letter dated 12 April 1872, Wendt wrote to Heinzen that her husband's property situation had changed dramatically: "Since my husband's financial circumstances had changed in a critical way" (KH Papers).

4. Wendt's inclusion in this group was indicated in a call for a meeting of the New York *liberal-republikanischer Verein* that appeared in the *New Yorker Staatszeitung* on 29 March 1872 (1872d). He was mentioned as one of the organizers of this meeting. In the following report of the meeting he remained unmentioned. The club demanded that the politics of expediency should be replaced by a politics of principles (*New Yorker Staatszeitung* 1872a). This network of German liberals was affiliated with the network of German freethinkers. Freethought and liberalism had their American counterpart, and as Neymann vehemently demanded in 1878, collaborated with each other. She wrote: "Now is the time to consider where German influence and German thought could be put to its best possible use! For those who emphasize a practical occupation and who want to see their well-considered thoughts realized in concrete action, there seems to be no better association than the 'Liberal Leagues,' which primarily seek to realize what German freethinkers have been seeking for years—the creation of a completely atheistic state, from which any religion is altogether banished and which safeguards everyone's unrestricted intellectual growth" (Neymann 1878b).

5. In an 1885 *New York Times* article this association was introduced as follows: "Five ladies, richly dressed in furs and silks, attended by a physician and a sanitary engineer, explored the mysteries of the east side slaughter houses yesterday. They were a committee from the Ladies' Health Protective Association—Mrs. M.F. Wendt, the President of the association; Mrs. A.M. Sparks, Vice-President; Mrs. C. Fendler, Mrs. F. Stiebel, and Mrs. F. Loewenberg, all of whom live in the neighborhood of First-avenue and Fiftieth-street" (1885). This association was active in safeguarding the sanitary code in the city and in particular in the slaughterhouse district, and so provided opportunities for political activism among women at the neighborhood level. Julia Thomas reported for *The Woman's Tribune* in 1888: "This Society was organized by ladies who were roused into action by the vile odors that invaded their homes and threatened the health of their households, viz., those arising from the slaughter houses, built and conducted in violation of the sanitary laws of the city. . . . This new year, 1888, marks the beginning of the fourth years' work of the Ladies' Health Protective Association" (Thomas 1888).

6. "In October, 1873, Mrs. Devereux Blake made an effort to open the doors of Columbia College to women. A class of four young ladies united in asking admission." *HWS* then gave the names of these four women in a footnote: Emma Wendt, daughter of Mathilde Wendt, is among them (Stanton, Gage, and Anthony 1889, vol. 3, 410).

7. The report of the ICW included: "Mathilde F. Wendt sent from New York her greeting to the Council, and begs that the work of Madame Anneke may be remembered, since it was she who contributed so much to the German Revolution of 1848. In that year Carl Schurz and this brave woman, forced to leave their Fatherland, sought in America the freedom denied them at home. To him, our nation opened the way to every honor, save only the highest; to her it denied even the exercise of the natural right of self-government" (*Report of the ICW* 1888, 368).

8. The Naturalization Act of 1802 declared that immigrants had to file “first papers,” meaning that they had to declare their intention to become citizens as well as their allegiance to the United States government before they could apply for naturalization. In the nineteenth century immigrants could declare this intent at any time after they had arrived in the United States. Some states had voting laws allowing those immigrants who had declared their intent to vote in state elections and on the ward and municipal levels. At times, as Catt and Shuler criticize in the quote above, some voters had very little knowledge of language, customs, and political interests because they had arrived very recently. “First papers” were no longer required in the process of naturalization after 1925 (Smith 1998, 25).

9. Karl Heinzen edited the *Pionier* from 1859 to 1880 (the year he died) in Boston. After his death it merged with the Milwaukee *FD*. He understood the radical paper as an organ of truth and justice. Carl Wittke, in his studies on the German-language press in the United States, praised Heinzen as ranking “near the top of German-American journalists of the nineteenth century, as far as ability and perseverance are concerned” (Wittke 1952, 275). Moreover, the *Pionier* was the only consistent German-American paper that had championed women’s rights from the outset. Wittke also mentioned Anneke’s *Deutsche Frauenzeitung* and Mathilde F. Wendt’s *NZ* as two further papers on the German-American market. Both papers, however, were short-lived compared to the *Pionier* and had a small audience (Wittke 1952, 162).

10. Wittke further explains that a new kind of personal journalism emerged with the group of intellectual Forty-Eighters. The new German-language papers became the personal organs of their editors. Wittke sees parallels for this development on the American side, where the *Tribune* became the mouthpiece of Horace Greeley. (On the side of women’s press, I would add, *The Revolution* is another good example of this type of personal journalism having represented Stanton’s and Anthony’s political agenda.) According to Wittke, the “disgraceful feuds” often ended in actual physical violence or in court where editors sued each other for slander, exaggeration, libel, and deliberate falsehoods (Wittke 1952, 264–66).

11. In Opfermann’s study of nineteenth-century female writers, the author stresses the potential of art (and literature in particular) to question the given and valid discourses in their present order, to point out and establish contradictions. This characteristic of fiction pertains to both the act of producing and reading the text (1996, 34–35).

12. Until 1835, according to Hochgeschwender, the United States was a “republic of alcoholics” (2007, 105), meaning the per capita consumption of alcohol was nowhere higher. According to evangelists, drinking was a sign of a weak character and lack of self-discipline, and they regarded alcohol to be satanic and demonic. Liberal philanthropists began to form temperance societies, which aimed at influencing people to reduce their consumption of alcohol. Evangelists radicalized this concept, saying alcohol was sinful and had to be prohibited altogether. Temperance societies were turned into antialcohol societies. The campaign culminated in the first prohibition law in Maine in 1850. Women of the evangelical middle class rose to become the leaders of this movement in the 1850s, and their public agitation was prominent (Hochgeschwender 2007, 104–6).

13. Hermann Wellenreuther showed this dynamic in his article about American perceptions of Germans as expressed in travel reports between 1800 and 1840. He pointed out the ways in which American travelers perceived Germans to be slow and idle. Germans were represented as doing their chores slowly and in turn spending a lot of time eating good food. Americans concluded that Germans wasted their time. Time, in the Americans’ eyes, should be used to an end and should not be wasted for leisure activities that lacked a higher purpose. Germans’ usage of time was connected to “impassive phlegm and absolute stupidity,” as Washington Irving observed (Wellenreuther 1997, 54).

14. As we will see, Neymann applied this dichotomy of passivity and activity to her descrip-



tion of German and American women as well. So did Elizabeth Cady Stanton, when she described the differences between German immigrants and herself (see Chapter 2).

15. The Married Women's Property Act of 1848 in New York, for example, declared that a woman would not lose the right to dispose of her property when she married. The 1860 law further provided that married women had the right to keep their earnings from labor or services: "and the earnings of any married woman from her trade ... shall be her sole and separate property, and may be used or invested by her in her own name" (Quoted in Kerber 1980, 570–71).

16. Most likely this character represented Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816–1872), a prominent nineteenth-century German traveler and writer. His two popular novels, *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas* (1846) and *Die Flußpiraten des Mississippi* (1848), were influential in creating an image of the United States in Germany. Between 1867 and 1868 Gerstäcker traveled to North America and Central America again. Perhaps, since this journey immediately preceded Heinzen's "Konvention deutscher Frauen," the traveler encountered Heinzen (Historische Commission 1879, vol. 9, 59–60).

17. The only mention of this association, yet no analysis and further examination, can be found in Häderle (1990, 88–89) and in Buhle (1981, 3).

18. Except for the information I mention in my study, Labsap remains an obscure personality. He coedited the *NZ* and later the *Östliche Post* in St. Louis.

19. The quarrel between Wendt and Labsap was the subject of a series of letters by Wendt to Karl Heinzen. In these she described the rumors, accusations, and slander that were brought against her and in turn railed against Labsap and other members of the German-American reform circle in New York. It appears as a long story of mud-wrestling in which Wendt became the victim of the swindler Labsap. She accused him of having started an intrigue against her in order to take over the paper entirely and to push her and the issue of women's rights away. Wendt was the first executive director and chief editor when the *NZ* was initiated by the German Printing Association. During the first year of its existence the paper accumulated \$900 in debt. Labsap offered to join Wendt as editor and to buy the paper from the German Printing Association as partners. "I inquired about his political, religious and social beliefs and his answers were to my complete satisfaction," wrote Wendt to Heinzen on 12 April 1872 (KH Papers). Labsap then contracted an investment of \$1000 to pay the debt, which he never did. The level of financial debt increased until March 1871, when Labsap proposed to resell the paper to the German Printing Association. They declined this "offer." Instead, he then demanded that Wendt discontinued her ownership of the paper, which she accepted under the condition that she remain editor on equal terms with Labsap. However, Labsap could not make his payments and things remained as they had been. According to Wendt's account of this intrigue, Labsap's attempts to kick Wendt out continued until June 1872, when Labsap had pioneered with a new paper, the *Oestliche Post*. He then successively ceased contributions to the *NZ* and let it die. Wendt was unable to buy it from Labsap then on account of the ill fate of her husband's business activities. In April 1872 she appealed to Heinzen in Boston that he merge his *Pionier* with the *NZ* in such way that the new paper would then appear simultaneously in New York and Boston, while Heinzen would remain the editor in chief (KH Papers, 12 April 1872). This merger was never realized. In her description of the fight over the paper with Labsap, Wendt continuously lamented that she was misunderstood and that a conspiracy was knit together to harm her personally. The foundations of such a conspiracy are mysterious, but they suggest that Wendt did not have a good standing within the German-American community. This distinguished her from Anneke and Neymann, as I will show in the following case studies.

20. Wittke concluded his mention of Wendt's paper as follows: "[B]ut her paper was small and had little influence" (1957, 162). The aforementioned letter written by Wendt to Heinzen

is the only proof of the paper's circulation. In comparison to Wendt's paper, Heinzen claimed a circulation of 1,200 for the *Pionier*, a number that was rejected by the *New Yorker Staatszeitung*, which insisted that it was only 550 (Wittke, 1957, 124). The *Staatszeitung*, as the most successful German-language paper of New York, had a circulation of 15,300 (Wittke 1957, 77). Wittke's initially quoted conclusion has to be considered in light of such numbers and it appears that the radical press, in contrast to the conservative press (in general), attracted fewer readers. In comparison, however, to English-language women's rights papers, the *NZ* truly was small: *The Revolution* had a circulation of 10,000 with no more than 3,000 subscribers at its peak, and the *WJ* had a circulation of about 4,500 and ran continuously from 1870 to 1920 (Masel-Walters 1976; Huxman 1991).

21. Amalie Struve (born in 1824, Mannheim, died in 1862, New York) was among the Forty-Eighters who left the German states after the defeat of the revolutionary upheavals and in April 1851 arrived together with her husband, Gustav Struve, in New York. After their arrival in New York, both partners devoted their energies to journalistic activities. Additionally, Amalie worked as a German teacher in New York and planned to open a German school. However, she never did. She never extended her public activities to American reform circles and instead remained in the German-American community of Forty-Eighters. She knew Mathilde and Fritz Anneke and corresponded with Mathilde Anneke. Apart from the few reports of American women's reform activities in the papers and magazines that her husband edited and published, no evidence of an exchange with American women could be found. A complete collection of the essays, reports, and literary texts she wrote in the United States has been edited by Monica Marcello-Müller (2002). For a biographical portrait of Gustav and Amalie Struve see Irntraud Götz von Olenhusen (1998). Also, Ansgar Reif's 2004 monograph is an excellent piece of research and interpretation of Gustav Struve's intellectual development. The couple's productive partnership is discussed in the study, advancing our knowledge of Amalie Struve's life and work as well.

22. Auguste Lilienthal grew up in a village near Berlin during the 1840s in a craftsman's family. Together with her second husband, a Jewish physician, she immigrated to New York in 1861, where both passionately supported Lincoln during the Civil War. After the war they were drawn into reform circles in New York. Auguste Lilienthal remained unmentioned in the American women's rights movement's documents and, therefore, is but a marginal figure only in the narration of this study. Apart from these sources, the German-American woman did not leave any papers and only seldom published articles in the *NZ* (for example a critical article about the celebrations of Independence Day on 4 July 1870, 1870a, or a radical article about the superstitions of religion, 1870b) and the socialist German-language paper *New Yorker Volkszeitung*. Her main field of public action was the socialist camp in the United States. A short biographical introduction was written by her daughter Meta Lilienthal in an autobiographical reminiscence, "Dear Remembered World" (Buhle 1981, 1–48).

23. Carl Adolph Douai (born 1819 in Altenburg, died 1888 in the US) came as a refugee to the United States in 1852 after having been indicted for treason as a participant in the revolutions at Altenburg. He first settled in San Antonio, Texas, where he immediately became an advocate of abolitionism. He differed from radicals such as Heinzen in so far as he first promoted the gradual abolition of slavery and only later developed the conviction that radical and immediate abolition would be the only solution. In 1854 he moved to Boston, where he founded a German school and kindergarten. At one time in 1856 he also was an assistant at Heinzen's *Pionier*. Douai's political thought was characterized by freethought, socialism, and communism. In 1868 he became the editor of the socialist paper *Die Arbeiter Union* in New York and between 1878 and 1888 edited the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, organ of the German socialist movement in New York (Dobert 1958, 61–67).

24. In his *Ordnung des Diskurses*, Foucault describes the doctrine as a binding and authoritative discursive element, which comprises speaking subjects as a group. The interplay between the doctrine as a type of speech and the subject is of a reciprocal character: A doctrine prohibits certain types of speech while simultaneously demanding other particular types of speech. In turn, the subjects themselves put forth words that serve the doctrine as a resource from which to generate the binding and authoritative rules that evolve as the boundaries of the discursive group. Due to this reciprocal mechanism, Foucault speaks of a dual subjugation: the speaking subject is subjugated by the discourse and the discourse is also subjugated by the group of speaking subjects (2001, 28–29).

25. The report must be flawed, and Neymann most likely meant that a housemaid hardly earned half of what a male servant earned.

26. The “New Departure” contested the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution and was adopted as a national strategy of the NWSA at the Washington Convention of 1871. Women referred to the guarantee of citizen’s rights declared to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States” in the Fourteenth Amendment and claimed, accordingly, their citizenship and their citizen’s right to vote. This strategy of “march[ing] into power directly, through the main political entrance, rather than indirectly, through the backdoor of the nursery or kitchen,” to say it with the pointed words of Ellen Carol DuBois (1993, 20), rested on a broad inclusive construction of the Fourteenth Amendment, according to which women claimed to be already enfranchised. Starting in 1868, women individually, and often in groups, went to the polls. The largest and most famous of these groups was comprised of the nearly fifty local activists, friends, and relatives who joined Susan B. Anthony in Rochester, New York, in 1872. After several cases, the Supreme Court case *Minor v. Happersett* in 1875 put an end to the “New Departure,” repudiating Virginia Minor’s suit and affirming that suffrage was not a right of citizenship. Suffragists thus began their pursuit of a separate women suffrage amendment, a less radical strategy because women suffrage was no longer tied to an overall democratic interpretation of the Constitution. In addition, the strategy of a separate amendment paved the path to elitist, racist, and nativist arguments.

27. For a list of women who attempted to vote between 1868 and 1873, see Gordon (2000, 645–54).

28. Buhle (1981) describes this self-confident strategy of separation as one that aimed at lifting Germans to the level of redeemers of this foreign country by incorporating a socialist movement. German-Americans built their own trading leagues and unions in order to work against the wrongs of “native Americans” [meaning US-Americans] (4).