Magnus the Good Proposal – <mark>REVISED</mark>   4/11/22
<u>Link to proposal submitted 3/8/22</u>
Thank you again for your thoughtful comments on our first proposal. In this revised version, we specify all information per your concerns in greater detail.

Names of proposers: Nora Vosburg, Mackenzie Johnson, Helen White

Title of Proposed Project: Stearns County German(s)

Revised abstract of the project:
The history of ethnic German settlers in the US and their culture are an important part of America's history and culture/society, and Minnesota is one of the US areas with historically dense German settlement. In this project, we document German past and present heritage in Stearns County, MN, through the collection of oral histories from locals, the compilation of literature on the topic, and work with archived recordings and documents in Stearns History Museum. Research in German heritage communities sheds light on a past everyday life and the role of ethnicity in identity, even beyond speaking the heritage language (post-vernacularity). But it also can further contextualize contemporary debates about language in immigrant communities. It thereby adds to the body of research that counteracts the myth that European settlers in America succeeded because of an immediate and willing shift to English[1].

Concern 1: Please tell us more about the timeline for your project. Your budget references May-July, yet your introduction specifies a three week project.

We propose a total of 90 hours of work time per contributor during May-July 2022. Because of varying plans of each team member during the summer, we will split up these work hours into three phases:
-   May (20 hours per person): preparatory phase: reading and background research, oral history form through IRB office, preparation of interview questions and scheduling meetings in the St. Cloud area; 17 hours of individual work time, 3 meetings a 60 minutes [1 initial meeting, 1 follow up meeting in which we will discuss our individual research results, 1 meeting to finalize interview preparations]
-   end of June-mid-July (50 hours per person): collecting data in Stearns County [exact dates depend on interviewee availability; snowball-system of finding more participants also requires flexible scheduling]; visits to the museum and preparation of archived material
-   July (20 hours person): preparation of collected data; first analyses; preparation of project and research presentations

Concern 2: We are also wondering if you will address or acknowledge the tensions around more recent immigration to Stearns County. We understand that your aims involve an earlier era, yet we do not want you to be drawn into a fraught current situation.

After your comment, we researched current debates that evolve around the topic of immigration in St. Cloud and the anti-Muslim rethoric that accompanies the arrival of refugees in the area. We have read different articles and comment boards, mainly published articles in the St. Cloud Times[2,3] and the New York Times[4] and acknowledge these ongoing tensions and acts of racist aggressions. Our goals for this project, however, are to catalog the German language in the area - and what little is left of this specific heritage community - and the experiences of this particular group of people. While this research informs us about *whose* heritages are promoted or denied, and - as mentioned in the updated abstract - it provides an important piece to understanding power dynamics underlying systemic promotion of certain, i.e. White immigrant groups over others, we will not draw further connections to current issues of racism and immigration in Stearns County.

As to your concern for the immediate presence in Stearns County, it is noteworthy that Nora Vosburg has been conducting research in Western Kansas, a rural and highly polarized area regarding debates of immigration, she is familiar with navigating the fine line between sociolinguistic data collection and being drawn into loaded political discussions.

Concern 3: Tell us more about how the team will combine their different backgrounds in the specific skills in achieving the three research goals.

To review the research goals in brief, we aim to

1) collect spoken data in Stearns County through oral history interviews in German and English
2) transcribe archived material as a collaboration with Stearns History Museum
3) create a comprehensive annotated bibliography about German (history) in Stearns County

All members of the research team have previously transcribed data using the linguistic tool ELAN, and worked with data preparation into a readable format. All members have also worked independently on various research projects that involved a thorough literature overview, including compiling annotated bibliographies.

Nora Vosburg established the liaison between this research group and the Stearns County community, and will be primarily responsible for contacting interview participants and arranging meetings. Her previous experience in oral history projects and data analysis will provide the guidelines for project management. She is also quite familiar with any processes involving IRB documentation. However, despite the difference in research experience between faculty and student researchers, the different skill sets in our team will enable each of us to take a leading role in different stages of the project.

As a German major with special interest in sociolinguistics, Mackenzie Johnson brings an understanding of the German language and culture to this project. Her previous studies on German heritage in the US will help inform our interview design. Additionally, she has a strong connection to the German community in Minnesota (Twin Cities German Immersion School K-8). She grew up in the Twin Cities and due to familial connection knows the Stearns County area fairly well. She is a fluent German speaker, which for this project will enhance the flow of

[2] https://www.sctimes.com/story/news/local/2015/08/02/rally-sparks-tension-conversation/31001223/

[3] https://www.sctimes.com/picture-gallery/news/local/2017/01/30/protesters-oppose-immigration-ban-in-st-cloud/97265970/

[4] https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/20/us/politics/minnesota-refugees-trump.html

oral histories and will enable the group to split up to interview multiple interview partners (which will be particularly useful for reducing trips up to Stearns County).

Helen White will provide valuable insights because of her previous experience in archiving and participating in similar research. She has worked at NAHA previously and has categorized and organized archival materials. She will call upon this experience post-translation to make these interviews more accessible and to hold them to archival standards. She has also worked with minoritized and elderly speakers through speech therapy sessions. Because she is familiar with the methodology of this type of research and how to go about gathering this type of data, she gives a valuable contribution.