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**RISE OF THE KKK; POLITICAL RHETORIC OF THE 1920S
KU KLUX KLAN IN THE WEST**

by

Justine S. I. Larsen

**Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for graduation with**

UNIVERSITY HONORS

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ABSTRACT

Recent works illustrate the significance of understanding the nuances of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s in the context of demographic and geographic differences. Using archival documents, newspaper records, and published works, this analysis dissects the differences in the Klan's ideology manifested within Utah, Idaho, and Oregon. Categorizing the Klan as a violent, extremist group with great political influence does not accurately describe any one of the Klans in these three states. While the Klan in Oregon and Idaho demonstrated varying levels of political power throughout their respective states, Utah's unique mostly homogenous religious, and therefore political, environment rendered the state relatively immune to Klan political influence. Utah, however, was no more immune to anti-Catholic sentiments than the other two, revealing an underlying theme throughout the three states. Utah's Mormon dominated culture is the reason behind its differences in Klan activity; Idaho and Oregon differ primarily in the strength with which their respective Klan's demonstrated. While similar in ideological emphasis and political infiltration, Oregon's Klan was much larger and more powerful politically than Idaho's. Understanding each state's Klan individually is foundational in adequately comparing the three states' experience in Klanism. It is equally important to note that anti-Catholicism as a part of the national Klan's platform presented itself in each of the three states. The differences in which these discriminatory sentiments surfaced in each of the states, burning crosses and parading in Utah and Idaho and codifying anti-Catholicism through exclusionary school legislation in Oregon, illustrates the understanding lost when making blanket statements about the 1920s Klan. Providing a state-wide comparison of the Klan in three western states reveals the differing significant characteristics evident in each state. The second wave Klan, while consistent in its anti-Catholic sentiments across Utah, Idaho, and Oregon, is incompletely characterized as a

stratified, cohesive organization. The differences between the states reflect the importance of analyzing the Klan on a local level in order to understand the nuances of the Klan by geographic location, revealing a more rich and detailed understanding of the mechanisms and motivations of the Klan.

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Justine S. I. Larsen

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Introduction

On a chilly December night in 1865, six ex-Confederate soldiers founded the original Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee. What began as a lighthearted club soon became a movement that would sweep the nation, terrorizing minorities and immigrants. Klansmen dressed in ghostly white sheets on horseback tearing through the countryside, terrorizing newly freed slaves and supporters of Reconstruction. The night riders, headed by first Grand Wizard General Nathan Bedford Forrest, amassed thousands of recruits and became frequently violent, using physical force including hanging and shooting their targets. Reports on the Klan's nocturnal hostilities led Forrest to decry the excessive violence and order the organization to disband in 1869. Forrest's internal efforts to curb the aggressions, however, proved futile. Demonstrating evidence of local governance independent of the national hierarchy, local Klaverns continued activity until Congress passed the Federal Force Acts of 1870 and 1871, successfully forcing the Invisible Empire into oblivion. By 1872 the Klan was diminished to dispersed local activity. The Empire's disassembly proved to be only a temporary quell before its most impressive reign in the twentieth century.

Idealized and glamorized by the premiere of *The Birth of a Nation*, the cinematic adaptation of Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s novel *The Clansman*, the Ku Klux Klan again surfaced in the public mind in 1915.¹ The same year on Thanksgiving night, sixteen men atop Stone Mountain near Atlanta, Georgia swore oaths of allegiance signifying the rebirth of the Invisible Empire. Methodist minister William Joseph Simmons ushered in the second and strongest wave of the Ku Klux Klan, viewing it as a financial opportunity as much as a fraternal organization devoted to law and order. Membership exploded when Simmons partnered with Edward Young Clarke and

Elizabeth Tyler from the Southern Publicity Association.² Reaching as many as 4 million people nationwide, the 1920s Klan continued to expand when Houston dentist Hiram Wesley Evans took power from Simmons in 1922. Evans oversaw the Klan's prime from 1922-1926, spreading from its Southern origins across the nation. Its rise was short-lived, however, in the face of severe backlash nationally and from individual states and local cities and towns. Anti-mask regulations, internal desertion, and corruption depleted the Klan's numbers, driving the Klan into obscurity. The once formidable Invisible Empire eventually disappeared from the public eye as the Great Depression swept through the country.

The 1920s Klan is not easily characterized by a single narrative; a similar story to the first Grand Wizard Forrest's efforts to disband the Klan when it became too violent. Leonard Moore's review of the historical interpretations of the 1920s Klan illustrates the disagreement among historians in characterizing the second wave Klan. Many analyses follow John Moffat Mecklin's 1924 assessment of the Klan as a particularly Southern, small-town, rural organization attracting mostly poorly educated, middle-class members.³ Historians Robert and Helen Lynd, R.L. Duffus, and Stanley Frost first explored a Klan extending beyond the South into the Midwest and even as far west as Colorado, California, and Oregon.⁴ This expansion of Klan history in the Midwest and West gave way to a more localized study of the Klan. Moore cites authors Norman Weaver, Charles Alexander, and Kenneth Jackson as instigators of the study of the second wave Klan by geographic locality rather than as a cohesive national movement.⁵ Their work indicated that the Klan conformed to the social, economic, and political concerns of the local demographic rather than adhering to a blanket, one-size-fits-all national ideology. The progression of understanding the Klan as a nuanced organization dependent on demographic and geographic differences has led to several works focused on the characteristics of Klans present in individual

towns, including Youngstown, Ohio, Memphis Tennessee, Orange County, California, Denver and Fremont County, Colorado, Indiana, Utah, Oregon, and El Paso, Texas.⁶ These narrower, more specialized analyses reveal a Klan too varied and dynamic to fit under a single, national label.

The saliency of this paper lies in supporting Moore's assertions that the Klan is more clearly and comprehensively understood in looking at the nuanced causes of Klans by region rather than asserting a blanket cause for the Klan despite differences in the prevalence of ethnic minorities and clear variances in emphasis throughout Klans by region. This paper illustrates the specific themes prevalent in the Oregon, Idaho, and Utah Klans, using secondary research and some primary documents recovered from various state archives and collections.

This research reveals inherent differences among the three state Klans while illuminating anti-Catholicism as a core theme that ties each Klan back to the national ideology. While the Klan in Oregon and Idaho demonstrated political power throughout their respective states, Utah's unique mostly homogenous religious, and therefore political, environment rendered the state relatively immune to Klan political influence. Utah, however, was no more immune to anti-Catholic sentiments than the other two, revealing an underlying theme throughout the three states. Utah's Mormon dominated culture is the reason behind its differences in Klan activity; Idaho and Oregon differ primarily in the strength with which their respective Klan's demonstrated. While similar in ideological emphasis and political infiltration, Oregon's Klan was much larger and more powerful politically than Idaho's. Understanding each state's Klan individually is foundational in adequately comparing the three states' experience in Klanism.

Data

An analysis of three state Klans requires primary and secondary sources from each individual state. The research for this study was conducted between May 2017 and July 2018. Utah's resources were primarily from the Utah State Archives and Special Collections from the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah, both located in Salt Lake City. The Larry Gerlach papers and Interviews with Jews from the Oral History Institute and interviews from the University of Utah, American West Center provided secondary and primary resources for this paper. Utah's Klan has been most thoroughly studied by University of Utah historian Larry Gerlach, from whose work this research borrows heavily.⁷ While Idaho's history with the Ku Klux Klan is not as well recorded as Oregon and Utah's Klans, its public activities were published in local newspapers. This analysis of Idaho's Klan relies on local newspaper reporting, archival documents, and oral histories. The Twin Falls Daily News and Idaho Statesman provided especially detailed reports of Klan activities, found through the Twin Falls Public Library and references from documents in the Larry Gerlach papers. The Latah County Oral History collection from the University of Idaho Library and records from the Idaho State Archives supplemented the research as well. Newspaper records and archival documents from the Oregon Historical Society and the City of Portland's archives as well as records from the University of Oregon's newspaper collection informed research on the Oregon Klan. As Oregon's Klan has been studied in detail, the research also relies on previous publications.

Utah

While historians studying the national Klan often brush aside Utah's Klan as relatively insignificant, the desert state was also considerably affected by the group's foray into the West. The Utah Klan, as in other state Klans, grew thanks to the local chapter's capitalization on issues pertinent to the region rather than an imposition of national Klan ideals. In the "Beehive State,"

the Klan's survival depended on its ability to use local concerns as fodder to boost the Klan's relevance and popularity. Specifically, the Utah Klan focused on anti-Catholicism, targeting Greek and Italian immigrants, and developing an economic force to rival the Mormon-dominated economy.

Beginning primarily as a small group based in Ogden and Salt Lake City, the state's most heavily populated cities at 43,000 and 118,000, respectively, the Ku Kluxers briefly spread as far north as Logan and as far south as Richfield in the Beehive State.⁸ The first recorded incident of the Klan's appearance in Utah was on April 19, 1922 at the funeral of Salt Lake County deputy sheriff, Gordon Stuart, in Sandy. "Dressed in white robes and tall hooded caps tipped with red tassels, [eight or nine Ku Klux Klansmen...appeared at the cemetery in the form of a human cross,] marched silently to the grave site and placed a cross of lilies with a banner that read 'Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Salt Lake Chapter No. 1,' upon Stuart's casket."⁹ The first of many later public appearances, the shock of this display foreshadowed the Klan's eventual prominence two years later.

Utah's Klan history debunks the idea, as Leonard Moore argues, that the KKK is primarily a rural-based group as the Klan was most prominent in Salt Lake City and Ogden, opening up chapters in Weber County, Carbon County, and Cache County for short periods of time, and lasting longest in Ogden up until December of 1931.¹⁰ Prior to 1924, the Klan had managed to recruit a small, poorly organized group in Salt Lake City and Ogden.¹¹ While the Beehive Klan struggled to rally support in 1921 to 1923, its heyday arrived in 1924, reaching an estimated 5,000 members at its peak.¹² The Klan had a harder time instigating local chapters in the more rural areas of Utah, as the homogenous nature of the Mormon settlement led to the Klan being "much in the minority," as Dr. Joseph Dalpaiz, a native of Helper, Utah, reminisced.¹³ The

Klan's rise in Utah was short lived and its demise began as rural city governments targeted its public demonstrations by passing laws forbidding masks. While Logan and Ogden successfully eradicated their local Klans by passing anti-mask ordinances in the city, which comically later applied to Santa Clause impersonators, Salt Lake City's anti-mask ordinance failed to have the same effect. By 1925, the Klan was largely thought to have died out. The Salt Lake chapter, however, surprised the community by organizing a public parade for the celebration of Washington's birthday through the city ending with a grand display of a fiery cross ablaze on Ensign Peak.¹⁴ The demonstration both shocked and struck fear in residents as they realized the Klan was larger than had previously been estimated.

For the Klan to be able to organize such a large event meant the Klan had survived in the predominantly Mormon state despite very public and obvious denunciations of the Klan made by Mormon leaders. The Klan's seeming triumph against the odds was short-lived, however. The Salt Lake Klan's presence continued throughout 1926 without any public demonstrations and eventually disbanded when their most prominent leaders were jailed, in the case of Milfred R. Yant, or, for William M. Cortner, switched allegiance from the Ku Klux Klan to the Minute Men of America. Cortner deemed the group as more "purely democratic and pro-American" while standing for many of the same values as the Klan.¹⁵ Ogden's chapter slowly and quietly followed suit, sending its last message to Klansmen nationwide in the Kourier in 1931.¹⁶

The Mormon thorn in the Klan's side

Utah's Klan was never as strong as other "Realms," or states, even compared to states in the West with similar ethnic populations. Since the state was largely LDS, the Klan found little foothold prior to 1924 when it returned in full force to recruit members and establish a chapter in Utah. One meeting reportedly had over 4000 people attend.¹⁷ Following an unsuccessful attempt

to organize a Salt Lake Klan chapter in the early 1920s, the Utah Realm successfully originated by William Cortner, the Imperial Representative for Utah, Idaho, and Nevada in 1924. Cortner's eventual shift in allegiance from the Klan to the Minute Men of America, however, contributed to the collapse of the Klan in Utah.¹⁸ Lacking a national representative, Utah Klansmen were not involved in national meetings, including Imperial Klans, an assembly of Grand Dragons and Great Titans, rulers of state Klans and dominions within states, respectively.¹⁹

Gerlach argues the "decentralized nature of the Utah Klan" resulted in "essentially autonomous" local Klans that varied in their expression of Klanism.²⁰ This poor structuring of the Klan in Utah was primarily a product of the vast Mormon influence in the state. Utah's religious atmosphere was unique in that it was dominated by one non-Protestant religion, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which greatly influenced the Klan's activity in the state. The influence of the LDS church, and its anti-Klan sentiment, factored into the Klan's weak presence in Utah.

Mormon leaders, including future LDS President George Albert Smith, sharply denounced the Klan for refusing to "sustain the law of the land."²¹ The Mormon anti-KKK sentiment ensured that most LDS members, save for a few bishops and members, avoided the Klan. Compared to the 70 percent Mormon population in the Beehive state, only about 26 percent of known Klansmen were Mormon, illustrating the strong impression the LDS church had on the Klan's success.²² The LDS church largely took the role of the Klan in the Beehive state. Where the Klan stood as moral activists in other states, Utah was already the "embodiment of the Klan's cultural ideal" overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon, rural, agricultural, and puritan.²³ Utah's Klan also lacked the infrastructure other states enjoyed, like a newspaper, store, or trading association to promote Klan ideals and distribute Klan gear throughout the state.²⁴

As a non-Protestant religion, LDS missionaries were targeted in the south by Klan members and brought this animosity towards Klan members with them back to Utah. Mormon sentiments against the Klan stemmed from the first wave Klan in the late 1800s, as Bishop Covington remarked in the Deseret News following a religious mission to the southern states, that Klan's actions and the state's retaliation in Mississippi left a "feeling of insecurity to life and property" warning that "no man's life is considered safe whose course is offensive to [the Ku Klux Klan]."²⁵ John Morgan, a Mormon missionary in the southern states in the mid-1880s, received a threatening letter signed by the KKK, to note that "the fate of your Bishop Lee should be another warning to you."²⁶ The letter referred to John D. Lee whose execution received national attention following his involvement in the Mountain Meadows Massacre.²⁷ Another issue was that the Utah Klan emphasized separation of church and state, which was particularly poignant in the state as it was difficult for a business or organization to succeed without approval by the LDS church.

Economic Motivation

The Utah Klan generally matched depictions of the national Klan in the socioeconomic characteristics of its members: middle class, white collar, some blue collar, typically middle-aged men who were well respected in the community. The differences within the Klan of the Beehive State lie in the unique religious makeup of the state. The LDS church discouraged its members from joining "secret societies." Utah's members consisted of a high concentration of Masons, and non-Mormons or ex-Mormons; some LDS did go against their leaders' condemnations of the group and joined the Klan as well. The LDS church fostered a strong notion of separation between Mormon members and outsiders, especially in business and economic spheres. The church encouraged members to focus on agricultural pursuits rather than

industrial activity. Prior to the 1900s, Utah's economy was split between self-sufficient Mormon cooperative businesses and non-Mormon mining and land speculation.

The 1900s marked a gradual integration between the two economies.²⁸ As such, those first attracted to the Klan in Salt Lake City were non-Mormon businessmen eager to establish a means of challenging the Mormon economic monopoly by joining the Klan.²⁹ Charles Kelly, an enthusiastic writer of six books and several articles on the West, reflected a common sentiment among Utah Klan recruits in expressing his hope that he would "get some business out of [joining the Klan] eventually."³⁰ After recognizing his hopes for economic success against a dominant Mormon business coalition in Utah were misplaced, Kelly resigned less than a year after having joined.³¹ Several prominent Salt Lake City businessmen initially joined the Klan in 1922 echoing Kelly's motivation for becoming a Klansman. The allure, however, soon disintegrated as some, including "Alex Christensen, the most publicly visible Klansman in the state," suffered financial losses in response to their affiliation with the Klan.³² The economic motivations for joining the Klan did not overshadow the primary motive attributed to Klansmen: a hatred and suspicion of outsiders.

Idaho

Idaho's acceptance of the Klan was foreshadowed by their history of anti-immigration efforts prior to the 1920s. Similar to the rest of the country, anti-German and anti-Chinese sentiments flared across the state, driving most of the Chinese immigrant population out of Idaho by 1910. A decade later the Klan was just beginning to surface in the Gem State. By December 1922, KKK leader and motivational speaker L. E. Berger claimed a sizeable 1,000 members.³³ Reverend Berger, a Nazarene minister, sparked the early stages of an Idaho Klan in the towns of Twin Falls, Buhl, Jerome, and Rupert.³⁴ About a month later, Berger spoke at an Independent

Order of Odd Fellows Hall in Buhl, Idaho and again in February in Idaho Falls.³⁵ Hoping to boost membership even more, Klansmen passed out membership forms during Berger's lectures, reporting that the cost of joining included a \$10 joining fee and dues were \$3.50 per year.³⁶ Idaho's first public Klan initiation took place in Ada County on April 9, 1924. The "open air public initiation" was publicized in the Idaho Daily Statesman with a note that "visitors will be allowed to witness the initiation but will be kept at some distance from the actual ceremonies by a guard-line of Klansmen."³⁷ Observers estimated the number of "Ada County men ... made Knights of the Ku Klux Klan" to be near 700, while "approximately 400 hooded Klansmen, from all parts of the Boise Valley" joined the event as well.³⁸ The initiation ceremony took place with pomp and grandeur. Conducting the initiation under the dim red lights of three electrical crosses and six American flags, "the candidates were grouped around an alter (sic)" as a 10-foot cross was lit ablaze.³⁹ The fiery background lit the scene as the assembly joined in singing "America." Klan candidates followed the music by taking part in the Klan oath and listening to speeches made by Klan leaders.⁴⁰ "Robed guards, for the most part unmasked, held back the five or six hundred spectators from the vicinity of the actual initiation ceremonies, marked by three crosses, illuminated by red lights for the men, and three for the women. Six dynamite blasts were fired, three as salutes to the Klan and three for the auxiliary."⁴¹ This grand display betrayed the relatively minor role the Klan played in the state.

During its comparatively short-lived popularity lasting only until about 1926, the Klan "affected only a small minority of Idahoans."⁴² Idaho's two Kleagles operated mainly out of Lewiston and Boise and organized Klaverns in five additional cities: Caldwell, Nampa, Twin Falls, Burley, and Pocatello.⁴³

Several Kloneaves took place across the Gem State, although only Boise held two consecutive years of Kloneaves, or conventions, as the other Klans began falling apart too soon to host a second event. Twin Falls' convention took place in Filer in August of 1924, while the Nampa Kloneave took place in June.⁴⁴ The Twin Falls rally claimed an astonishing 45,000 in attendance.⁴⁵ Payette's Klan also joined in the festivities gathering one of the largest crowds to have come together in the town. The Salvation Army corps from nearby Weiser joined the parade, as did Imperial Representative Cortner.⁴⁶ Following the elaborate parade and presentation of the "finest specimen of 'Old Glory' ever exhibited in Payette," the candidate Klansmen and Klanswomen awaiting their initiation took the oath of the Klan.⁴⁷ The Nampa Kloneavocation boasted an estimated thirty thousand attendees.⁴⁸ While it is likely that approximations from newspapers overestimate the number of attendees, the high estimations illustrate the formidable appearance of the crowd at each event. Boise's Kloneave, the most impressive in the state, took place over the course of two days in early September of 1924. The event was publicized as the largest convention in the intermountain states and was attended by Klansmen from Boise, Kuna, Meridian, Caldwell and other towns, as well as Klansmen from surrounding Western states.⁴⁹ Several additional conventions took place around the state as the year progressed.

Not long after the Klan's ascent, its descent began as quickly as it had risen. Idaho's Klan received first notice that anti-Klan sentiments were boiling beneath the surface at Boise's first Kloneave in 1924. Boise Mayor E. B. Sherman clarified his previously given verbal permission for the upcoming Kloneave, with a written permit. The permit allowed the parade to take place with the "explicit understanding that no masks ... be worn by any member of the parade."⁵⁰ Mayor Sherman's condition foreshadowed the anti-mask ordinances Idaho communities would

later pass to drive the Klan underground, similar to Utah's anti-mask ordinances.⁵¹ In September of 1924, the Twin Falls Klan ran into trouble when eight masked Klansmen were arrested after blocking traffic by walking through the town in full regalia. The following month, Twin Falls' anti-mask ordinance caused some interference with the town's Halloween carnival and parade. The city attorney remained adamant that the anti-mask ordinance be followed regardless.⁵² The public arrests of the masked Klansmen, and the city attorney's refusal to rescind the mask ordinance, even for children at Halloween, illustrated the town's commitment to forcing the Klan's decline.

While the Klan faced backlash in Idaho, there were signs that it might survive. On a 1925 "inspection tour of Idaho from mid-April to mid-May," Cortner "sought to ready the Gem State chapters for incorporation into the Realm of Idaho, to be directed by a Grand Dragon in Boise instead of from Salt Lake City."⁵³ Hosting a few more Klonscaves in and near Boise through the summer of 1925, the Klan continued to have enough influence to instigate a runoff for multiple City Council elections.⁵⁴ Idaho was "clearly the keystone of Imperial Representative Cortner's three-state domain."⁵⁵ Despite seeming success for the Klan, however, its decline had already begun.

The Idaho Klan suffered its most crippling backlash from within. As high-profile members began to jump ship to the newly formed Independent Klan of America, based in Indiana, the Gem State Klan began to take on water. Already in late 1924 E. E. Davidson, one of the Klan's former lecturers, left the Ku Klux Klan for the Independent Klan of America, citing the militarization and corruptness of the Klan as his reason for leaving.⁵⁶ President of the Klan breakoff, Samuel H. Bemenderfer later directed a series of directed attacks on the Ku Klux Klan from October 11, 1925 to November 15, 1925 in the Twin Falls Daily. In a letter to Imperial

Wizard Evans Bemenderfer accused the Klan of paying Roman Catholics in “high official positions,” marrying Roman Catholic wives, and in some instances supporting Roman Catholic politicians.⁵⁷ The Klan in Idaho could not survive the high-profile attacks and fizzled like the Utah Klan. Even Imperial Representative Cortner himself left for the Minute Men of America in January of 1926.

Political Impact

While Idaho’s Klan was short-lived, its impact was significant, especially on a political level. On a national level, U.S. Senator William E. Borah, the “Lion of Idaho,” illustrated the influence of ideas consistent with Klan ideology. Arguing in favor of a strong support of states’ rights and in a belief in “Anglo Saxon superiority,” Borah served as the spokesperson for Western progressive Republicans and Dixiecrats from the South in delivering a powerful speech against an anti-lynching bill in 1922.⁵⁸ “Although he claimed that he always favored justice for Negroes, he opposed such legislation as the Dyer antilynching bill in 1922.”⁵⁹ In addition to its conviction against pro-African American anti-lynching legislation, Idaho targeted the substantial group of Basque Americans, mostly Catholic immigrants from Spain or French Basque country who had settled in Idaho. While more immigration laws targeted Chinese immigrants, Catholic immigrants were targeted in the passage of the Emergency Quota Act, which established immigration quotas based on nationality. Eastern and southern Europeans were the primary focus of this law due to their political and religious affiliation.⁶⁰ As a champion of isolationism, U.S. Senator William Borah election and 33 years serving as Idaho’s senator reflected Idaho’s strong anti-immigration sentiments.⁶¹

Locally, the Klan began to have political influence as early as 1923 in Twin Falls. In the days before the election, the Klan candidate seemed set to win the Twin Falls mayoral race. A

well-timed anti-Klan campaign launched by the *Twin Falls Daily News* editor, however, tipped the balance. The campaign succeeded in preventing the Klan from winning, though it lost by a mere 44 votes.⁶² The Klan's influence was strong enough that Klan sympathizers pushed a runoff for the City Council seats.⁶³ Following the election of Mayor Hodgin on April 3, 1924, a campaign ad published in the *Twin Falls Daily News* decried the Klan's meddling in the mayoral and City Council election. The Klan was accused of creating "pretend issue[s] ... in a brazen attempt to impose upon and scare sincere law-abiding citizens into voting for the Klan candidates."⁶⁴ The Klan's local influence on elections did not go unnoticed and continued throughout 1924. In Twin Falls, candidates sought to associate themselves with the Klan. Socialist candidate George H. Ackley running for Senate, appeared at a Klan meeting at which the Reverend J. E. Slimp, Minister of Kimberly Christian Church, introduced the Klan and its objectives to an estimated 500 attendees.⁶⁵ In Ada County, where Idaho's capital is located, the Klan put on lectures in hopes of boosting Klan support. Dr. J. H. Harmon, Klan Imperial Representative of Western states and state Klan lecturer, spoke about political reform across the nation. While both "old political parties are crooked," Harmon advised, "when you see a candidate indorsed by the Klan, you'll know he's a good man, whether he be a Republican, a Democrat, a Socialist or a Progressive."⁶⁶ Former Idaho Governor James H. Hawley fought the Klan's influence and that of the Progressive Party, calling support for either "the most un-American thing that has ever happened to this country."⁶⁷ Despite Hawley's and others' anti-Klan efforts, the Klan's sway continued in Twin Falls throughout 1925 when the Klan spurred a runoff for multiple City Council elections.⁶⁸ By 1926 the Klan's influence had pattered out. Idaho's Klan experience illustrated a briefly successful attempt at political influence but its electoral endeavors pale in comparison to Oregon's Klan.

Oregon

Mirroring Utah and Idaho's demographics, Oregon's dearth of racial diversity, while often the subject of jokes in the 21st century, actually stems from a more sinister background. The state had little racial diversity thanks in large part to three "exclusion laws" requiring all black people to leave Oregon Country and prohibiting them from legally living in what would become the state of Oregon in 1859. The state went so far as to include in its constitution its exclusion of black people from residing in the state, becoming the only state that joined the Union as a "whites-only" state.⁶⁹ This institutionalized lack of diversity perhaps both promoted and discouraged the Klan's future establishment in the state. While the sparse racial diversity created an unlikely setting for the Klan to become popular as the Klan had little opposition in promoting anti-black sentiments, Oregonians clearly emulated the Klan's ideals as illustrated in their legal code. The Beaver State's discriminatory immigration laws left about 2,000 black people in the whole state by 1920.⁷⁰ Lacking racial diversity, Oregon's history with the Klan of the 1920s is similar to the Klans in Idaho and Utah in that they all focused their hostility towards Eastern Europeans, specifically Catholics. Rather than the violent reputation the Klan has in the South, "the Oregon Klan was much more involved in social and political matters."⁷¹

Oregon's Klan had a particularly strong hold as Klan membership per capita was the highest in the country, according to educator and expert on black history in Oregon Walidah Imarisha.⁷² Its organization was the largest Ku Klux Klan Klingle west of the Mississippi River in the 1920s. "The Klan moved across the border from California to Oregon in 1921; by the spring of 1922 there were 14,000 members in the Beaver State, and the Klan was strong enough to ruin the careers of many otherwise acceptable political aspirants."⁷³ Fifty-eight Klaverns covered the Beaver State a year later. The Klan in Oregon organized in Portland, Eugene,

Astoria, Tillamook, Ashland, La Grande, Medford, and several other districts. Oregon's first Klan of about 600 established itself in Medford, a small town near the southern border of the state. The charter's beginnings were commemorated by a celebration in northern Roseburg attended by nearly 2,000 southern Oregonian Klansmen.⁷⁴

Medford, Oregon may have been the Klan's first establishment, but Oregon's largest chapter was located in Portland. The capital boasted an impressive 15,000 members by 1923. Illustrating the Portland Klan's brazenness, its members phoned several leaders of the community, including the mayor and the chief of police, inviting them to a meeting at the Multnomah Hotel in Portland. City's leaders were met by several of the most powerful Klansman in the state; among them was Fred Gifford, "Exalted Cyclops" who later became the Grand Dragon and King Kleagle, state level recruiter, Luther I. Powell. Newspaper reporters also invited to the clandestine meeting took a group photo later published in the *Portland Telegram* on August 2, 1921.⁷⁵ The photo depicted the Klan's association with government leaders and its view of itself as a law-enforcing entity. In front of the district attorneys, captain and chief of police, mayor, and several other civic leaders, Powell asserted, "There are some cases, of course, in which we, [the KKK], will have to take everything in our hands."⁷⁶ The King Kleagle's proclamation foreshadowed the Klan's strong hold it would develop in the Beaver State. Oregon's membership estimates peaked at larger than twenty-five thousand as the Klan's political power continued to grow.⁷⁷

Oregon's second largest Klan population was in Astoria. With an estimated 1,000 members in the town of 14,000, the Klan succeeded in installing a Klan-backed sheriff in Clatsop County in 1922. City officials, including the mayor and every city commissioner in Astoria, were Klan candidates according to the local newspaper in November of that year.⁷⁸ Well

versed in the tactics of intimidation and driving out foreigners unwelcome in their town as illustrated in the vicious treatment of blacks, Astoria's Klan sent a threatening note to a man named Tom McKay. While the motivation behind the note is unclear, the message was crystal. Ominously declaring, "your case is not forgotten. The right opportunity will come," the note was signed by the KKK and arrived with a newspaper clipping of Klan floggings in Tulsa. Astoria's Klan led a parade in 1924 at a Klonvocation attended by over 10,000.⁷⁹ Like Idaho's conventions, the event was published in the local newspaper and attendees witnessed speeches from Grand Dragon Fred Gifford. The intertwining of the Klan and the local government is illustrated by Mayor O.B. Setters' welcome speech at the event, featuring a large burning cross. Tillamook, likewise, received visit from the Grand Dragon at a three-county Klonvocation on the Tillamook fairgrounds. The rally drew thousands of Klansmen from surrounding areas and heard from several including Adjutant General George A. White of the state militia.⁸⁰ The Klan even owned a newspaper headquartered in Astoria titled the *Western American*. The Pacific Coast newspaper reported on the Klan's events and published propaganda throughout the state, praising those in support of the Klan's ideology.⁸¹

Klan activities in Oregon were largely political and social, avoiding much of the violence characterizing the Klan of the South. Backlash, however, began soon after the Klan's rise to popularity in the state. In 1922, Oregon Governor Benjamin W. Olcott released a response to "three assaults in southern Oregon perpetrated by members of the Medford klavern (a local organizational unit of the Ku Klux Klan). The first victim, a white piano salesman from Medford, was kidnapped and threatened with hanging, while the other two, a black man and a half-Mexican man (according to one account), were taken out into the country and terrorized with 'necktie hangings,' that is, non-fatal lynchings."⁸² Olcott's stand against the Klan did little

for his reelection. He lost out to Democratic candidate Walter M. Pierce by a large margin in the election of 1922. Following the overruling of the school bill, Pierce largely ignored the Klan and its goals, visibly diminishing the Klan's political status. Illustrating the community disapproval of the Klan, the *Portland Telegram* and a number of other newspapers fought the Klan publishing "community censure of Klan activity" in its pages juxtaposed with its reporting of Klan activity.⁸³ Vicious Klan political tactics in towns like Astoria and Gifford's dictatorial rule ultimately proved tiring to the Oregonian Klansmen and membership quietly diminished throughout the late 1920s. Lem A. Dever, *Western American's* editor, came under scrutiny for his relentless attacks of Catholics and candidates opposing Klan-backed candidates, eventually apologizing publicly in his own paper.⁸⁴ Dever resigned in 1924 and published a devastating "Confession," exposing the Klan's internal corruption. Another public departure and condemnation of the Klan by former Portland Klansman Ben Titus also severely damaged the Klan's reputation.⁸⁵ Similar to Klans across the nation, the internal dissensions and corruption led to an eventual disbanding of the Beaver Klan in the late 1920s. Some smaller Klans continued quietly in the 1930s but the majority had moved on.

Political Influence

Oregon's past is rife with racially discriminatory legislation illustrating the prevalence of Klan-aligned ideology already present in the state. In 1919 realtors and bankers were prohibited from selling properties or giving loans to minorities for properties, according to a Code of Ethics passed by Portland's Realty Board.⁸⁶ The regulation resulted in residential segregation, as Albina, a neighborhood near Union Station, was one of the only areas not considered a white neighborhood. The regulation illustrated the community's ongoing discrimination towards non-whites. Oregon's statute forbidding black immigration into the state wasn't struck down until

1926, five years after the Klan's initial foray into Oregon. Oregon was also one of only six states to refuse to ratify the 15th Amendment, allowing black men the right to vote. It additionally withdrew its initial ratification of the 14th Amendment until 1973 when the State finally re-ratified the amendment. Oregon passed an anti-immigration bill in 1920 forbidding non-citizens from owning land, primarily targeting Japanese and Chinese immigrants. Oregon's anti-immigration and anti-Catholicism legislation reached so far as to require all magazines written in foreign languages to provide English translations as well. Oregon's concern with regulating schooling manifested itself in the bills the state legislature proposed in 1921, requiring teachers to pledge loyalty to the United States. The fear that Catholics' loyalty to the Pope would lead to a political infiltration from Rome ran rampant in Oregon and its legislation reflected this fear.

Where Idaho and Utah's Klans narrowly failed to elect many city-level officials, Oregon's Klan succeeded politically at a much higher level. Tillamook's local government included an alarming number of Klan-backed candidates including the county sheriff, a state representative in the legislature, the superintendent of schools, the school director for 1925, the city attorney, and most city council members from 1924 to 1928.⁸⁷ Converting even Medford Mayor and possible Republican gubernatorial candidate Charles E. Gates who had "expressed disapproval of masks," the Klan in Oregon resonated with many. Gates described the Klan's oath as "one that no Christian man could take exception to."⁸⁸ The Beaver State Klan elected fellow Klansman Walter Pierce in 1922 as governor. A decade later he was elected as member of the U.S. House of Representatives, serving until 1942. The Beaver Klan initially supported the Republican candidate, State Senator Charles Hall, running against Governor Olcott in the 1922 primaries, but switched parties when Hall lost the primary. In an attempt to dethrone Olcott as punishment for his strong anti-Klan rhetoric and in the hopes of electing a candidate seemingly

more sympathetic to their cause, the Klan threw its support behind the Democratic candidate. With the added support of the Klan, Pierce won the gubernatorial race, demonstrating the Klan's political strength in the state. Notably, only one of the five candidates in the race dared decry the Klan as a "menace."⁸⁹ Part of Pierce's platform included a pledge to support a Klan-backed school bill. The Oregon Compulsory Education Act of 1922 required Oregon children to attend public schools, essentially shutting down all Catholic private parochial schools. After its passage, the bill was struck down in the court two years before it was set to take effect. Despite having largely ignored the Klan following his election, Governor Pierce appealed the ruling in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) and lost. Pierce's fierce support for the bill likely reflects less of a conviction for the Klan than a true belief in the bill and its anti-Catholic implications. In Oregon, as in Idaho, the political support for Klan-aligned ideology stemmed from already mainstream beliefs rather than uncovering previously concealed fringe philosophy.

Anti-Catholicism

As sociologist Frank Bohn expressed in 1925, "no single cause can be alleged for [the Klan's] remarkable strength and its lasting power."⁹⁰ While race messages are typically thought of as the primary motivations behind the KKK, the Klan capitalized on various local agendas to perpetuate the group's local presence and appeal to new members, resulting in a myriad of goals driving the Klan's strength and power. Largely devoid of much racial diversity, the Klan's of Oregon, Utah, and Idaho turned to local issues as a way of fostering popularity and buoying the Klan's membership numbers despite the initial lack of obvious attraction to the Klan in these northwestern states. The unifying theme among the three states is illustrated in evidences of anti-Catholicism in each state.

The Utah Klan's anti-Catholic efforts stemmed from a suspicion of immigrants even among the Mormon religion, despite having been settled by immigrants attracted to the state through conversion. The legislature passed a state law in 1919 requiring "every [non-English speaking] alien person...between the ages of sixteen and forty-five years" to attend "Americanization" classes. The law penalized those unwilling to comply with a misdemeanor and a fine between \$5.00 and \$25.00 for not attending the courses.⁹¹ The legislature's passing of the bill illustrated the fertile breeding grounds the Klan found in Utah. During the Klan's reign in Utah only a few terrorist acts were targeted against black people. As a state lacking much diversity, only twelve lynchings are estimated to have taken place in Utah, including the lynching of African American, Robert Marshall, who was accused of murdering town marshal Milton Burns.⁹² In conjunction with attacks against African Americans, the Klan protested several times in Salt Lake City "against Catholicism" and "Jews too."⁹³

The Ku Klux Klan served as an outlet for anti-Semitism in Utah's capital city.⁹⁴ According to Joseph and Harry Doctorman, Mormons "were always pretty friendly with the Jews" in Salt Lake City. However, the effects of national and local stigma against those considered as "others," Jews, Catholics, and southern European laborers, are reflected in Claire Steres Bernstein's memory of "feeling pressures...of being different" as a Jewish native to Utah.⁹⁵

The Klan in Utah's rural areas targeted most of their efforts against Catholics, and immigrants, specifically Greek and Italian immigrants.⁹⁶ The Klan burned "crosses up on the hills and they tried to get organized here, but that didn't last too long either."⁹⁷ While perhaps not large enough to last long, the Klan in Helper still developed an impressive reputation, burning crosses in a can filled with "railroad waste" on a hill nearby signaling that "someone was in

trouble.”⁹⁸ In their attempts to scare off those “troublemakers” who didn’t live up to the Klan’s ideals, the Klan in Helper allegedly painted a cross on George A. Rowley’s car with tar.⁹⁹ In Magna, the local Klan battered not only foreigners, but also native-born Catholics, whose allegiance to the pope incited suspicion that while citizens, members of the Catholic church were loyal first to a foreign entity rather than solely dedicated to the U.S.¹⁰⁰ Carbon County Klan members, especially in Helper, primarily antagonized Catholics. Burning crosses in front of Catholic homes and churches, the Klan incited what historian Larry Gerlach titled a “cold war” between Italian and Irish Catholics and the Klan in Helper.¹⁰¹ Gerlach relates a number of incidences in which Catholics were the brunt of Klan activity.¹⁰² The Ogden Klavern focused primarily on Catholics as well burning two crosses in response to the dedication of St. Joseph’s parochial school.¹⁰³ The sentiments in these examples echo much of the motivation in joining the Klan across other states in the nation. These instances of hate against Catholicism, Judaism, and southern European immigrants illustrate how the Klan in Utah echoed national motives and actions despite the particular context of the state.

Idaho was similarly more focused on Catholics than any other religion or race. In fact, Moses Alexander, a Jewish immigrant born in Bavaria, became Idaho’s governor and the first Jewish governor in the nation from 1915 to 1919.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, historian David Chalmers, remarks, “in one little town, the solitary Jewish family was included in all of the Klavern’s social activities to show that the Klan was a strictly nondiscriminatory movement aimed only at outsiders.”¹⁰⁵ Acts against Idaho’s small black population were few and far between. Having the “smallest black population percentage-wise in the West...Idaho served as the south’s passionate partner in jointly killing federal anti-lynching legislation.”¹⁰⁶ The state is one of seven to report no lynchings of African-Americans at the time. In 1925, Henry Field, “Buhl’s only black

resident” received a threatening letter from the Klan following a conversation of the “state of local banks after the post-WWI agricultural depression” of which the Klan apparently didn’t approve. While Fields was not the only one involved in the discussion, he alone received the Klan’s threat.¹⁰⁷ While the Idaho Klan was not completely devoid of race-motivated activity, as illustrated in the break-in of a black home in Lewiston, the Klan in Idaho was depicted largely as “a social club where the members from time to time sat down to worry about the foreigners and Catholics in the lumber and mining camps to the north, and the Pope in Rome.”¹⁰⁸

Indeed, anti-Catholicism resonated with the Idaho Klan on a much deeper level. In a speech to Southern Idahoans, Dr. Harmon, Klan Imperial Representative of Western states, claimed Klan and Masonic responsibility for the successful passage of the new immigration law of 1924, which targeted southern Europeans, who were typically Roman Catholic. He argued, “the United States must protect itself against the illiterate populations of southern Europe.”¹⁰⁹ Among Klan recruits across the state, Canyon County had a significant number of Ku Klux Klan members who burned crosses and marched in protest of Catholic immigration.¹¹⁰ The Klan was purported to have burned crosses in the yards of Roman Catholics in both Twin Falls and Lewiston. “As a boy in 1925” in Twin Falls, historian Leonard J. Arrington once “witnessed a burned cross on the lawn of a Roman Catholic neighbor.”¹¹¹

Oral histories recorded of those who grew up in or near Lewiston depict a Klan particularly antagonistic towards Catholics. Catherine Mahon, native of Lewiston-Clarkston, an Irish member of the Catholic church told of the Ku Klux Klan burning a cross on a Catholic priest’s lawn in the 1920s, recalling that it was “popular” to join the Klan at the time.¹¹² She continued that “it was very difficult for a Catholic woman to be accepted” in the ladies club in her hometown, illustrating another instance in which anti-Catholicism sentiments showed

through in western Idaho. While Mahon's Catholic mother was working at the Tribune, a local newspaper company, a notebook containing a list of Klan membership disappeared from her workplace. As the only Catholic employee, Mahon's mother was suspected and endured "intolerable" treatment by her colleagues until the notebook turned up later after a young man working for the paper had borrowed and returned the notebook, unaware of its contents.¹¹³ Lola Clyde, a native of Moscow, Idaho, claimed the Klan in Idaho "wasn't against colored people at all, it was just against Catholics." recalled a meeting in which "some kind of nun, escaped from a convent,...was going to tell all....And there were a lot of men standing around there guarding [the meeting] and someone said to me, 'oh, those are Ku Klux Klan members. They've come here to protect her so she can get up and talk.'"¹¹⁴ The Klan's actions against Catholic members of society mirrored events in Utah and Oregon, illustrating that the Klan's success in these three states was dependent on using issues that resonated with locals rather than imposing all national ideals.

Similar to Klan events in Idaho, a former Catholic nun held meetings throughout Oregon decrying the Catholic church added to local fears that it was trying to infiltrate the political system.¹¹⁵ Oregon citizens, as well as Klansmen, targeted Catholics.¹¹⁶ Having been spared the hostile legislation blacks were attacked with, Roman Catholics made up about eight percent of the state's population.¹¹⁷ Oregon's anti-Catholic antagonism varied from thinly veiled denials to full-blown hostility. In Astoria, the Klan succeeded in driving several Catholics from the school board and even the head of the Chamber of Commerce.¹¹⁸ Medford's anti-Catholic nature surfaced in a statement by a Klan-backed candidate in 1922 claiming "every Roman Catholic ... fought me to a finish."¹¹⁹ William Phipps, editor of the *Medford Clarion*, targeted Roman

Catholics, accusing Catholics of leading a boycott of his paper while denying his posts and actions were anti-Catholic in nature.¹²⁰

One of the most significant manifestations of the Klan's anti-Catholic agenda was its emphasis on educational reform.¹²¹ While arguments for the bill were written by a coalition of the Supreme Council of Masons, the Grand Lodge of Oregon, and the Imperial Council of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the bill had wide support among non-Klan voters in Oregon.¹²² The bill's passage by 11,821 votes depicts a population largely in agreement with the Klan's ideology. Poorly masked as a benevolent law intended to promote America as a "melting pot," and produce "true American[s]" through assimilation in mandatory public schools, the law ultimately targeted Catholic parochial schools.¹²³ The bill would prevent political infiltration from the Vatican by closing down the very schools the pope may be using to brainwash future Roman Catholics. Attending public schools would ensure future generations would "esteem the United States of America and its institutions above any other government, civil, political or ecclesiastical, in the whole world," as outlined in the Kloran.¹²⁴ The legislation was hailed by the national Klan and intended as a model for the rest of the country until it was struck down in 1924. The national influence on these western Klans is evident in these manifestations of anti-Catholicism even on the other side of the nation from the Klan's headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

Conclusion

As illustrated in this analysis, depicting the Klan as a homogenous group nationwide fails to grasp at the nuances present in each individual state. More localized works have demonstrated the importance of delving into the Klan at a city level and future research dissecting the variances between klaverns within Idaho and Utah, especially, will provide greater insight.

Several works analyzing the klaverns in Tillamook, La Grande, and Eugene, Oregon provide rich examples of the value in understanding the 1920s Klan on a localized level.¹²⁵ Larry Gerlach's review of the Utah Klan as a whole provides a foundation for more specialized analysis of the state's local klaverns. Idaho's Klan lacks an extensive overview as of yet and understanding the motivations of the Klan in the Gem State would prove a valuable addition to Klan history in uncovering the social nature of the Klan. Providing a state-wide comparison of the Klan in three western states illustrates the differing significant characteristics evident in each state. The second wave Klan, while consistent in its anti-Catholic sentiments across Utah, Idaho, and Oregon, is incompletely characterized as a stratified, cohesive organization. Moore's and others' assertions that the 1920s Klan is best understood when studied on a local level is evident in this analysis.

Categorizing the Klan as a violent, extremist group with great political influence does not accurately describe any one of the Klans in these three states. While both Oregon and Idaho were susceptible to strong Klan political influence, Utah's Mormon bloc largely prevented any attempts at political infiltration. It is equally important to note that anti-Catholicism as a part of the national Klan's platform presented itself in each of the three states. The differences in which these discriminatory sentiments surfaced in each of the states, burning crosses and parading in Utah and Idaho and codifying anti-Catholicism through exclusionary school legislation in Oregon, illustrates the understanding lost when making blanket statements about the 1920s Klan. The differences between the states reflect the importance of analyzing the Klan on a local level in order to understand the nuances of the Klan by geographic location, revealing a more rich and detailed understanding of the mechanisms and motivations of the Klan.

REFLECTIVE WRITING

Word Count: 1220

My experience completing this capstone project has been a long journey and taught me a lot about myself and about my topic. I learned, as my mentor Dr. Colin Flint warned, that the topic a researcher typically starts out with in mind quickly evolves as the project develops. I found that my initial hopes in studying the interaction of economic disparity between rural and urban areas as it related to Klan membership in the 1920s was not feasible due to a dearth of membership records in the Ku Klux Klan. As a clandestine organization, the KKK is an elusive research topic and requires a lot of digging in less obvious resources to find information. My project developed to understand the differences in ideology and strength of the Klan in Oregon, Idaho, and Utah. These three states were relatively close and provided distinct differences in how the Klan manifested itself in each state in the 1920s. It was important to narrow my research to one era as studying and comparing three different states already presented a challenge in providing adequate information on each while presenting a concise and clear report. I found that I relied heavily on previous research to find sources and additional insights into each state. Idaho was particularly challenging as the state's Klan hasn't been studied in detail like Utah and Oregon's Klans. The research for Idaho required more research in newspaper archives for reports on the Klan and analysis from historical analyses of Idaho in general.

This experience opened my eyes to the importance of archival work. I have a new appreciation for the organization and dedication necessary in writing a book like historian Larry Gerlach's *Blazing Crosses in Zion: The Ku Klux Klan in Utah*. The amount of careful research and analysis required for historical, qualitative research is impressive and notable. One of the most challenging parts of this research was the dependence on archival matter. Thanks to the

Office of Research and Graduate Studies, the Honors Program, and the Political Science Department, my trips to archives in Oregon, Idaho, and Utah were fully funded. The university, especially the Honors Program, is a mine of resources to help you in your research. In my experience, it's a good idea to go to the closest archives multiple times and to try writing a piece from the material you collect before going to visit archives that are farther away and might be difficult to visit again. Additionally, the Merrill Cazier Library is a phenomenal resource as far as archival documents in Special Collections on the basement floor. The librarians are also incredibly helpful in suggesting resources and help. The research was especially rewarding when pieces seemed to click and the idea that you were hoping would present itself in the research was substantiated by the material.

I would say that the most important aspect of taking on a project like this is to give yourself the time to do it. If I were to do this over, I would take less credits my last year and give myself enough time to focus several hours a week on the project. Another difficult aspect of the project was deciding what to cut and what to keep for the final product. Much of the research I acquired was great material but would have made for a much longer final paper and didn't quite fit in with the rest of the research. Like any writing project, it's hard to cut sections that you're proud of but don't necessarily add to your paper.

The best advice I could give in starting a capstone project is to pick a topic that you've already done a lot of research on and to choose a mentor (or several) who has researched your topic and can guide you. While you shouldn't reuse old material, having a foundational background on the topic you're researching will allow you to go deeper and be more specific in your research. Having done some preliminary research on the KKK in several classes gave me at least some context in beginning my project, which was helpful. Choosing a mentor shouldn't be

a quick decision. Take time to talk to several different professors before deciding who would be most helpful in writing your thesis or doing your project. Working with your mentor is an incredibly formative part of developing and executing a capstone project. A mentor can guide you through the process, especially as you are honest and open with your mentor about your findings and your skills. Asking for help and reviewing resources and documents with your mentor will allow you to develop better analytical skills and cut down on time spent trying to figure it all out by yourself. Individual motivation is good and asking for help will enhance the work you do on your own.

While I don't see myself studying the KKK in the future, I gained a lot of valuable skills in completing this project. The experience enabled me to understand the importance of archival work and the necessity of going to the source as often as possible to gain new insights in qualitative work. Reading newspapers from the 1920s gave me a more nuanced perspective of the Klan and how it fit in the culture and society in each state. Seeing announcements about LDS mission calls next to mostly national articles about the Klan in Utah papers, for example, depicted the prevalence of the LDS church and the general lack of reporting on the Klan locally. Conversely, Idaho's papers often published upcoming Klan events, illustrating the social, fraternal nature of its Klan. Oregon's papers revealed the intertwining of the Klan in political affairs. These differences were evident the more material I went through and having guides from former scholars' works was helpful in knowing where to look for what material. I am incredibly grateful for this experience. This project pushed me to pursue an interest I had and discover the challenge of finding data and uncovering themes within the data in order to present a publication that contributes to the existing research. Thank you for the experience and the wonderful years

at Utah State University. My experience was greatly enhanced and deepened by my participation in the Honors Program.

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- ² John Moffatt Mecklin, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Study of the American Mind 2nd Ed.* (New York: Russel and Russel, 1924 & 63), 7.
- ³ Mecklin, *The Ku Klux Klan*; see also Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1924); Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York, 1955); John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955); William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-32, 2nd ed.*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); John D. Hicks, *Republican Ascendancy, 1921-1933* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960); David A. Shannon, *Between the Wars: America, 1919-1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin School, 2nd ed., 1979).
- ⁴ Leonard J. Moore, "Historical Interpretations of the 1920s Klan: The Traditional View and Recent Revisions," in *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s*, ed. Shawn Lay, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 344; Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture* (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, 1929); Robert L. Duffus, "The Ku Klux Klan in the Middle West," *World's Work* 46 (1923): 363-372; Stanley Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan* (Indianapolis: Ams Pr Inc, 1924).
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- ⁷ Gerlach, *Blazing Crosses in Zion*.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, 25, 41, 64-67, 116.
- ⁹ W. Paul Reeve and Jeffrey D. Nichols, "Klansmen at a Funeral and a Terrible Lynching," *History Blazer*, (September 1995), accessed July 23, 2018, <https://heritage.utah.gov/tag/anti-mask-ordinances>.
- ¹⁰ Gerlach, *Blazing Crosses in Zion*, 127; Moore, "Historical Interpretations of the 1920's Klan," 352.
- ¹¹ Gerlach, *Blazing Crosses in Zion*, 52.
- ¹² *Ibid*, 137.
- ¹³ Joseph Dalpaiz, interview by Kendra Tomsic, "Joseph Dalpaiz, Helper, Utah, Carbon County oral history project, No. CC-29, March 12, 1973," *J. Willard Marriott Library* (University of Utah) March 12, 1973: 27-28, accessed July 18, 2018, <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/details?id=783938>.
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- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, 114-115, 123.
- ¹⁶ *Kourier Magazine* (December 1931): 48 as cited in Gerlach, *Blazing Crosses in Zion*, 127.
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- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 143.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 105.
- ²² *Ibid*, 133.
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- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 142.

- ²⁵ "From Monday's Daily: Returned," *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, UT), Apr. 27, 1870.
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- ²⁹ Gerlach, *Blazing Crosses in Zion*, 131.
- ³⁰ *Ibid*, 30.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, 31.
- ³² *Ibid*, 32.
- ³³ Jim Gentry, *In the Middle and On the Edge*, (Twin Falls, Idaho: College of Southern Idaho, 2003) as cited in Steve Crump, "Column: How the Klan almost took over Twin Falls," *Magic Valley* online, last modified June 11, 2009, https://magicvalley.com/news/local/column-how-the-Klan-almost-took-over-twin-falls/article_50bb3881-93ef-5345-a5ae-43a8ad0df571.html.
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AUTHOR BIO

Justine Larsen graduated cum laude with University and Departmental Honors from Utah State University in 2018 with a B.S. in Economics, a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in Management Information Systems. During her time at Utah State, she was an Undergraduate Research Fellow, Huntsman Scholar, and received several prestigious university and departmental scholarships including the Ray L. and Eloise Hoopes Lillywhite Scholarship and the Dr. M. Judd and Helen G. Harmon Scholarship. She has contributed to several published papers and a book, "Green vs. Green: The Political, Legal, and Administrative Pitfalls Facing Green Energy Production." Larsen also volunteered as a board member for the Institute of Government and Politics and the Society for the Advancement of Ethical Leadership.

Following graduation Larsen will intern at the Internet Policy Research Initiative at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under Ilaria Liccardi researching data privacy and human-computer interaction in user experience studies. After a few years of working, Larsen plans to attend law school.



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I affirm that Justine Larsen presented "Rise of the KKK: Political Rhetoric of the 1920s Ku Klux Klan in the West" publicly on 4/12/2018 in Logan, Utah as a Conference: Student Research Symposium.

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