Nationwide trends in KKK membership fluctuate in correlation with increasing income inequality, especially between rural and urban demographics. As income levels rise in urban areas, where minorities are typically concentrated, rural areas, mainy consisting of white workers, see a decline in average income. This disparity then may manifest itself in waves of white supremacist activity.

As sociologist Frank Bohn expressed in 1925, "no single cause can be alleged for [the Klan's] remarkable strength and its lasting power." While race messages are typically thought of as the primary motivations behind the KKK, the Klan capitalized on various local agendas in Oregon, Idaho, and Utah to perpetuate the group's local presence. Their remarkable strength and its lasting power.

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Catherine Mahon, a Catholic member from the Lewiston Clarkston area in Idaho, said, "They've come here to protect her around there guarding it 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.'"

She was superior to all of them in education and everything." Catherine Mahon, a Catholic member from the Lewiston-Clarkston area in Idaho, said, "They've come here to protect her around there guarding it 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.'"

Women of the Ku Klux Klan

"There is a growing tendency throughout the nation for joint meetings between the Women and the Knights. The two institutions, while distinct in their organization, are dedicated to the same cause and working toward the same ideals." -Women of the KKK Official Bulletin, Jan. 1927, p. 2.

Future Research

• Historic fluctuations of white nationalism, especially the racially motivated terrorist group the Ku Klux Klan
• The intersection of short-term and long-term economic dynamics in relation to the Klan
• Placing Klan activity within the context of Kuznets cycles and Kondratieff waves
• Trends in income inequality across urban and rural workers

Economic Inequality

• "We have permitted the crowding in of foreigners, thus forcing upon America's own sons and daughters economic conditions wherein they cannot support large families. The economic pressure produced by the alien standard of living makes it impossible for them to give to the children of a large family the opportunities in life which every true American demands for his sons and daughters. The best economists declare that we have permitted aliens to enjoy the prosperity which should have gone to our children.
• The Klan of Tomorrow, 1924, p. 9.
• "The Cosmopolitan movement is assailing foundations of our civilization. Cosmopolitanism includes Universalism, Sovietism, Communism, Socialism, Anarchism, Judaism, and especially Roman Catholicism."
• The Klan of Tomorrow, 1924, p. 8.

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Methods and Materials

This research analyzes documents written about the Ku Klux Klan and original documents published by the Klan in the 1920s. Historical documents gathered for this project come mainly from the City of Portland, Oregon Archives, the Idaho State Archives, and the Utah State Archives.

American Nationalism

• "The Klan embodies the group mind of America. It is the representative of complete nationalism. It is not sectional, it is not personal, it is not selfish, it does not represent any private interest—it speaks for all America."
• "The Klan of Tomorrow, 1924, p. 4.
• "Americans find today that the aliens...seek to destroy Americanism in the name of philanthropy...All Americans, who are Americans by instinct as well as by birth, have been grappling with this problem. They have been searching for something to save our nation and our institutions from perversion..."
• "The Klan of Tomorrow, 1924, p. 3.

Abstract

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