Knights in White Satin: Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Kelli R. Kerbawy
Knights in White Satin: Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Thesis submitted to
The Graduate College of
Marshall University
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
History

By

Kelli R. Kerbawy

Committee Members:
Dr. Robert Sawrey, Chair
Dr. Montserrat Miller
Dr. Kellie Bean

Marshall University
Huntington, WV
April 18, 2007
ABSTRACT:

Knights in White Stain: Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Kelli R. Kerbawy

The Ku Klux Klan is often thought of as a male-dominated organization; however there is evidence that women contributed to Klan efforts and participated in their own group, Women of the KKK. This study analyzes women’s involvement within the KKK during the 1920s. Women’s participation in early progressive movements, including temperance and suffrage, served as a catalyst for women’s involvement with the KKK. This paper explores women’s roles in the Ku Klux Klan as leaders within the WKKK. From earlier social movements, women gained knowledge needed to promote and expand the WKKK and other white supremacist women’s organizations. This paper examines conflicting rhetoric published by the organizations outlining roles women potentially served in leadership positions, while highlighting that these were only within the domestic sphere. Finally, this project delves into evidence regarding Klansmen’s treatment of women, which eventually led to exposure of the contradictory and hate-filled nature of the KKK.
DEDICATION:

To Jama for always encouraging and believing in me throughout my graduate school experience and always knowing that I could finish this. To my mom for all her support, advice and kind words during this process. To my grandmother for her wonderful letters full of advice and for our chats.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I would like to thank my thesis committee for their comments, patience, advice and help throughout this process. Thanks to the wonderful staff of the Ball State University Special Collections for their help in researching and copying of primary documents.

Jama, Mom, Dad, Grandma, Phillip, Matt and Josh, thank you for confidence in me and for your endless support.

Thank you to Tony Curtis for countless nights of talking, revisions and other help. To Jessie Watkins, a huge thanks for listening every step of the way. Shari, thank you for always having kind, encouraging words.

Special thanks also goes to Heidi Williams for her friendship, support and editing skills. Without your advice and help this project would not be what it is- you have my gratitude.

My gratitude also goes to Kem French and Mahjabeen Rafiuddin for their encouragement to participate with the Kentucky Conference for Community and Justice as well as the People to People Conference in Lexington, KY. Your motivation and drive to eradicate racism, sexism and homophobia in this world inspired me to continue moving forward with my work. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the wonderful work you both continue to do.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Indiana Historical Research Foundation, the University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research and the Indiana State Library for their help in acquiring primary documents for this project.

Finally, I would like to say thanks to my extended family, friends, and co-workers who tolerated me through this entire process.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Abstract ......................................................................................................................... ii

Dedication ...................................................................................................................... iii

Acknowledgements ...................................................................................................... iv

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................ v

Introduction ................................................................................................................... i

Chapter One: Her Struggles of Yesterday: White Supremacist Women’s Participation in the Suffrage and Temperance Movements in the United States ... 24

Chapter Two: 100% True Blue American Women: How Women of the WKKK Reinforced and Challenged the Ideals of True Womanhood ......................... 43

Chapter Three: Pledge, Promise and Swear to the Protection of American Womanhood: How Women’s Involvement and Treatment in the Klan Lead to Its Downfall ................................................................. 76

Conclusion: Women of the Ku Klux Klan: A Life of Contradiction, A Legacy of Hate ........................................................................................................ 85

Appendix One .................................................................................................................. 90

Appendix Two ................................................................................................................ 102

Bibliography ................................................................................................................... 104
Introduction

Women’s contributions and roles within the Ku Klux Klan are important in understanding how women affected one of the largest white supremacist organizations in the world, however, these roles have yet to be fully explored from a historical perspective. Women were active in the KKK during the first period of Klan-related activity that extended from the early years of Reconstruction to the 1870s, but later women formed their own groups such as the Women of the Ku Klux Klan (WKKK) in the second wave of KKK activity beginning in 1915.1 Though it may appear to many people that women have not been at the forefront as leaders of the White Supremacy movement, women have been and still are an integral part of furthering the message of racial supremacy.2 Through subversive actions within an all-female community, women involved in the Ku Klux Klan planned and executed their own activities with the purpose of maintaining white supremacy, not only in the South, but throughout the United States. In the 1920s white supremacist women across the nation helped influence and expand the reach of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States in large part through their work with the WKKK. This thesis is an examination of women’s involvement in the early 1920s in the Ku Klux Klan and the group’s conflicting rhetoric concerning women’s roles; it includes a discussion of social and political issues that the women of the KKK were involved in specifically from 1923 to 1927. By examining the conflicting rhetoric, tensions and contradictions reflected in their documents this thesis focuses on women’s positions within the WKKK as leaders, wives, and mothers.

---


2 The White Supremacy movement’s main goal is to maintain white rule over all other races. This includes voting and maintaining white leaders in office, teaching racial hierarchy in schools (with the white race at the top), and keeping other races subordinate to whites in every aspect of life. White supremacy is often supported through violent means, as well as playing on the stereotypes concerning African-Americans, immigrants, Latinos, and all other non-white minorities.
Women’s involvement within the WKKK is a prime example of women’s changing public and private roles in the 1920s. This thesis examines the juxtaposition between women’s roles at home and within the WKKK and how these challenged and reinforced traditional female positions in society. The struggles between women’s obligation to their families and homes versus expanding roles in the political and public sphere are issues that have long been ignored by historians. This study offers a new perspective on the women of the KKK. White supremacist women’s participation in the suffrage and temperance movements helps highlight how conservative women began their political involvement in the United States and later focused their political work in the white supremacy movement.

While men of the KKK emphasized women’s obligation as wives and mothers, publications by the WKKK offered a contradictory and convoluted ideal of American womanhood that encouraged women to be leaders, but only as wives and mothers in white supremacist women’s organizations. The WKKK seemingly functioned as a separate entity from the men’s organization but often joined the men’s organization for parades, meetings and various social functions in their communities. By encouraging women’s dependence upon the home and children, yet emphasizing women’s leadership among other women, male members of the Klan helped promote women as political organizers while continuing to define them in domestic terms. This blurring of the lines between the domestic and political spheres challenged both men and women within the organization.

Few historical studies which focus on white supremacist groups, focus on women’s participation. Most focus predominantly on men involved in the lynching and terrorization of African Americans. Yet women took part in all types of supremacist actions as well, both as
members of the male-dominated groups and as leaders of their own organizations. This research concludes that women almost inadvertently challenged the traditions of the white supremacy movement with changing and problematic rhetoric that countered and reinforced women’s domestic and political roles. By discussing the origins of women’s involvement within the WKKK, this research addresses how the suffrage and temperance movements helped influence women’s participation in the white supremacy movement. This study examines the specific gender roles of wife and mother and how women stepped outside these roles to establish and run white supremacist women’s organizations, particularly the WKKK. Finally, this thesis explores how women affected the larger, traditionally male organization and contributed to the downfall of the entire organization by 1930.

This thesis examines a variety of official publications printed by the WKKK, including the “Women of the Ku Klux Klan Constitution,” various pamphlets describing particular rituals including funeral rites, and leaflets distributed to educate and inform the general public concerning women’s roles in the Ku Klux Klan and society. An analysis of these documents offers insight into how women functioned within the male-dominated KKK. These documents also describe the mission of the WKKK and how the organization sought to create a society in which white men and women stayed in power over other races.

---

3 When discussing white supremacist women in these organizations, there is confusion surrounding women who were part of the WKKK, those associated with the KKK and those who simply considered themselves white supremacists. Generally, references to the WKKK in this paper include women associated with the KKK although whether they were members of the WKKK is difficult to ascertain due to the secrecy surrounding the organizations and their members.


5 The Kamelia, a group similar to the WKKK, formed at approximately the same time. A former leader of the KKK created the group in an attempt to involve and accept women within the group. The Kamelia was later absorbed into the WKKK after a legal battle between current and former male leaders of the KKK.
The Klan has never been without its fair share of internal controversy that continued to plague it throughout its active history. David Chalmers’s book, *Hooded Americanism*, defined the Ku Klux Klan formation in 1865 as the first wave of the post-Civil War white supremacist movement. This wave lasted from 1865 to 1871 when negative public opinion and legal action concerning the violent actions of the KKK drove national leaders to officially disband the organization. What set the first wave apart from the second was the national tension following the Civil War that led to the rise of the Klan in the first place. The Klan meant to frighten African Americans away from voting and exercising rights granted to them by the so-called Reconstruction Amendments. By 1869, however, the Klan was in turmoil within its ranks and by 1871 various Klan groups were disbanding in every state due to fighting and disagreements within the group concerning public acts of violence against African Americans and the leadership of the organization. Public sentiment, particularly in the North, did not favor the Klan and their illegal and vicious actions. Apparently the Klan was no longer as popular as it was in the period immediately following the Civil War. The leader of the group, Imperial Wizard Forrest, ordered the burning of all the records in January of 1869 due to the fact that, as Chalmers asserted, “the Klan had become perverted in some localities and that public opinion was becoming unfavorable to masked orders.” After violence condoned by leaders of the KKK slacked off, violence against African Americans in the name of racial supremacy continued and the group went underground. Although the Klan was not officially an organization by the mid-

---


7 Ibid., 13.

8 Ibid., 19.

9 Ibid., 19.
1870s, that did not stop many of its former members from continuing to terrorize and lynch African Americans in the name of white supremacy. When the group resurrected in 1915 and included women, the legacy of violence and terrorization continued and women helped to perpetuate racial discrimination.

The second phase of the Klan began in 1915 and with this came the eventual participation of females in positions of power within their own group.10 The formal re-emergence of the Klan began when William J. Simmons, a KKK sympathizer whose father was a former Klan member, gathered a group of new and old Klan members in Atlanta to reform the group and awaken it from a “slumber of half a century.”11 The group grew rapidly in membership over the next few years. According to Chalmers, from 1915 to 1920 the group grew to include thousands of members.12 Chalmers stated that by 1921 “[A]lmost a hundred thousand Klansmen had paid their money and stepped across the mystic threshold to take their chances in the Invisible Empire.”13 As Klan membership grew, so did its influence and reach beyond the Southern states. Klan orders were established from Oklahoma, New York, Illinois, Indiana and throughout the United States.14 One widely held belief is the Ku Klux Klan existed solely in the South, when in

10 Ibid., 28.

11 Ibid., 30. For Chalmers it seems as if the new Klan members felt that violence was not taking place during this time in between 1871-1915. Surely there was violence taking place and it was ignored because of other concerns during this period, particularly fighting over the continuing struggle for political control of the South between Republicans and Democrats.

12 Ibid., 31-33. Chalmers talks about the participation in these various pages over the years and the fact that it grew in leaps and bounds during this time.

13 Ibid., 31-33. The Invisible Empire was a name members of the KKK used to refer to the organization. The name related to the secrecy with which the group composed their actions and the use of masks to hide member’s identity.

14 Ibid., 33. Chalmers documents several incidents in Oklahoma, Texas, Kentucky, West Virginia and several other states. The Klan’s influence was widespread. Interestingly, there is a small mention of West Virginia including Huntington on pages 156-7.
reality the Klan’s influence extended west, north, east and south. With women’s admittance into the Klan as recognized members in 1923, Klan membership swelled dramatically.

The women of the KKK were determined to fit into the strictly defined traditional roles as wives, mothers, daughters and sisters, but also to serve in the white supremacist movement. Believing that every person of every race had a place, women of the WKKK believed theirs was subservient to their husbands, even as their roles within white supremacist organizations contradicted their beliefs. Even though they were female, they believed their race elevated them to a status above black men and all other minorities. However, through the early twentieth century and the growth of the organization, they, too, moved beyond the boundaries of domesticity to engage in leadership in both the home and outside world.

In the early 1920s, looking to expand the growing influence of white supremacist organizations in the United States, the Ku Klux Klan actively encouraged women to join their ranks by helping form women’s auxiliaries of the Klan. Many white Protestant women from all socioeconomic backgrounds joined together to promote white supremacy and protection of white womanhood from the perceived threat of brutality at the hands of African Americans and immigrants. Membership of the Klan was based largely on dedication to white Protestant heritage and included all classes of women. Women joined the Klan for a variety of reasons including spousal involvement. Some women joined due to their association with local Protestant churches and countless others joined because women felt it was their duty to protect their nation from perceived threats from African Americans and immigrants. Many became devoted members after their involvement with progressive movements, taking the lessons they learned and twisting them into racist, bigoted ideals which they argued would protect their

communities. Within the Klan, women found an outlet for religious expression, community involvement, and political action to benefit the white race.

Women’s dedication to their communities came before their involvement with the Klan, but through the organization they were able to implement community improvements and political campaigns under an umbrella of white supremacy. One commonly held myth surrounding white supremacists is that the men and women associated with the organizations were ignorant and uneducated. In fact, many members of both the male and female groups were well educated and highly respected members of their communities. A variety of women associated with the Klan held jobs that included doctors, nurses, and shop owners. The most common denominator in women’s involvement was church affiliation, which included religious involvement primarily from Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker churches. Many members were involved in civic groups including the YWCA, domestic violence shelters, homes for “fallen” girls and women, Masonic lodges and women’s auxiliaries or fraternal orders. Part of the popularity of the Klan was their seemingly positive community involvement.

During 1923, the WKKK and the KKK flourished in cities across the United States. During this wave of Klan activity, Klan chapters and influence grew out of the South and expanded nationwide. Chapters of the WKKK formed in Minnesota, Ohio, Missouri, Florida, Oklahoma, New Jersey, Indiana, Michigan, and in nearly every other state as well. In 1922, the Southwest states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Arizona held 61%

16 Ibid., 121.
17 Ibid., 121. At least two prominent WKKK leaders in Indiana were Quakers.
18 Ibid., 121.
19 Ibid., 29-30, 60-65.
of the Klan membership in the United States.\textsuperscript{20} However, by 1924 the majority had shifted to the North Central states of Indiana, Ohio and Illinois, with Indiana having the highest Klan concentration.\textsuperscript{21} Throughout the United States during the early 1920s historians estimate the Klan had between three and six million members.\textsuperscript{22} Exact numbers, of course, are difficult to determine due to the secrecy of the organization. But clearly women helped expand the ranks and numbers nationwide through their participation in a wide variety of white supremacist women’s organizations including the Kamelia, the Ladies of the Invisible Empire, Queens of the Golden Mask, and the largest group, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan. These groups dedicated themselves to creating a more moral, white supremacist community in which to raise their families.

Although the most known of the white supremacist women’s organization was the WKKK, there were several white supremacist women’s organizations that formed prior to 1923 in which women were active. Organizations that preceded the WKKK included the Queens of the Golden Mask and the Ladies of the Invisible Empire (the group’s members were often referred to as LOTIEs).\textsuperscript{23} The LOTIE’s, founded sometime in 1921 or 1922, were less politically active than the WKKK and the women preferred to view their duty as the “chosen messengers of

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 30.

\textsuperscript{21} Kenneth T. Jackson. \textit{The Ku Klux Klan in the City 1915-1930}. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 15. The numbers that joined during this time are astonishing. In 1922, the Klan in the North Central region only made up 6.4\% of membership. By 1924, the North Central region replaced the Southwest region, which dropped from 61\% to 25.6\%.

\textsuperscript{22} Shawn Law, “Hooded Populism: New Assessments of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s,” \textit{Reviews in American History}. 22 December 1994. Lay’s numbers come from a number of other historical sources he reviews in his article. However, the number comes from a combination of other estimates.

\textsuperscript{23} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 25.
Although the women emphasized political education of women, they mainly dedicated themselves to community advocacy and protection of their children and homes.

The Queens of the Golden Mask was another early Klan auxiliary and predecessor to the WKKK. The group was started by Indiana Klan leader D.C. Stephenson in the early 1920s. There is little documentation on the group, but historians estimate it was founded sometime in 1922 as it competed with a later white supremacist women’s group, the Kamelia. One of the main activities of the Queens of the Golden Mask was the formation of “poison squads” that helped Stephenson defeat political opponents through gossip and rumors. These women were led by Daisy Douglass Barr, a woman who later rose to prominence in the WKKK as a major influence of Klan politics in Indiana.

Controversy followed the formation of women’s groups within the white supremacist movement. The Kamelia was founded in 1922 after the KKK founder and former Grand Wizard William Joseph Simmons became involved in a power struggle over the official leadership of the KKK with Imperial Wizard Hiram “Hi” Evans, the recognized leader of the Klan. The Kamelia grew out of an already active group within the KKK, The White American Protestant Club and was officially recognized by Simmons as the new women’s auxiliary section of the KKK. An internal struggle between male Klan leaders over the Kamelia’s membership and

24 Ibid., 26.
25 Ibid., 27.
27 Ibid., 189.
29 Chalmers, Hooded Americanism, 105.
recognition as the official women’s auxiliary led to a battle that became part of inner turmoil within the Klan that eventually led to its demise by 1930.

The Kamelia and the WKKK competed as separate organizations, vying for white supremacist women’s membership. Eventually, after a battle in court, the WKKK officially established their own organization in 1923. Members of the Ku Klux Klan, both male and female, were forbidden by leaders to speak to anyone associated with the Kamelia because of the fighting between the men of the organization. The WKKK headquarters, located in Little Rock, Arkansas was independent of the male headquarters located in Atlanta. Despite the fact that both the WKKK and the Kamelia competed for women’s membership, the WKKK billed itself as being made up “by women, for women and of women [and] no man is exploiting for his individual gain.” The white supremacist women’s groups vied for the opportunity to prove themselves independent from the men’s group and rule.

Using an argument based on racial hierarchies and supremacy, as well as by emphasizing women’s traditional roles and stressing their leadership among other women the WKKK changed how the conservative and racist establishment of the Ku Klux Klan accepted women within its ranks. While the women of the KKK may not seem likely leaders because of their emphasis on domesticity and submissiveness, some white supremacist women rose to the top of their organizations in leadership roles. They did so while emphasizing the traditional Victorian ideals of female roles they held dear to their hearts. Women’s involvement in the WKKK is an example of how white supremacist women struggled to fit into what their male counterparts and they themselves believed to be their true role.

30 Blee, Women of the Klan, 28.
**Historiography/Primary Sources**

An analysis of primary documents published by the WKKK and the Kamelia dating from 1923 to 1927 shows that women involved themselves within the white supremacy movement. These documents offer information about the rituals and ideals of the Klan and about women’s specific roles within the larger white supremacist movement. Using documents such as “The Constitution and Laws of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” articles from *The Kluxer* magazine, “Ideals of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” as well as “The Code of the Flag” and “America for Americans: Creed of the Klanswoman” published by the WKKK and the Kamelia, this thesis examines how these were more than just women following traditional roles laid out by the organization and by society more generally. These documents show that white supremacist women were not only leaders within their own organizations, but also examines their roles in the KKK. Women’s primary role in the KKK was specifically to raise obedient, white children within the context of Christianity, teaching them that the white race was superior to all others.

But these women stepped outside these traditional roles through their participation in the struggle over women’s right to vote and their involvement in the temperance movement. Within these two movements some women found the tools and training tactics to become white supremacist leaders.

Secondary sources often portray women as sexual objects to be protected, but sometimes occasionally discuss their political influence. Scholarly books and articles written about the KKK offer a more complete understanding of men’s roles in the white supremacy movement, while largely, although not entirely, ignoring women’s involvement. The secondary works examine Klansmen's argument that women were under constant physical and sexual threat from African American men. Because women maintained the home and raised children, it was
important to protect them from violence supposedly perpetrated by black men. If women had the
right to vote they could further the maintenance of white supremacy by helping elect candidates
who supported the ideals of the Klan.

The Klan is viewed through a number of historical lenses. Scholars examined the Klan as
early as the 1950s through narrative accounts which considered the KKK a part of the bigger
picture of Reconstruction. These sources provide an explanation of the foundation and
motivations behind various racial supremacy groups, including the Ku Klux Klan. Other sources
discuss the second wave of the Klan from 1915 to 1930 and offer an ideological framework and
background for women’s participation in the organization. Finally, other secondary sources
concerning the KKK are those written from a sociological perspective that study the connections
between race, gender, and sexuality. These sources lay the foundation for a better understanding
of why men and women involved in the white supremacist movement used the threat of rape to
justify the degradation of black men and further the aims of supremacy for the white race.

Historical narratives of the KKK provide the background and framework for the men’s
organization that women eventually joined as auxiliary members and make up the bulk of
scholarly research published to date. Such studies include William Pierce Randel’s *The Ku Klux
Klan: A Century of Infamy*, David Chalmers’ *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux
Klan*, and Allen W. Trelease’s *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern
Reconstruction*. These accounts deal with the beginnings of the Klan and the historical context
in which the Klan originated. Studies of this type deal with the “club” that began in Pulaski,

1971).
Tennessee where six young Confederate veterans decided to form a fraternal-like order. According to such scholars as Chalmers, Randel and Trelease, the “club’s” original intent was not to terrorize African Americans or cause them harm, but simply to intimidate them back into what some whites believed was African Americans’ correct place- in the fields and submissive to Southern whites. Often these accounts leave out details of the political processes, such as Reconstruction, that were unfolding in the United States at this time. Implementation of Jim Crow laws in the 1880s and 1890s helped intimidate African Americans into their prescribed roles as workers and inferior beings. These are important social issues not generally dealt with in depth in the narrative accounts. In not dealing with such issues, these histories imply that the laws and regulations were simply in existence to maintain the peace of the nation and life went on as usual. While life may have progressed normally for many, that is not the case for everyone. These works offer an understanding of activities the Klan participated in, as well as a description of their beliefs and ideologies. An understanding of what the men of the KKK did and believed, is essential to an understanding of how the women of the WKKK formed the ideas and pamphlets they published.

Scholarly research clarifies the racist intentions of the KKK including why they believed that whites were a superior race to all others, the most important idea of these organizations and, in fact, is the basis for their teachings. This research is equally important because the scholarship deals with racial consciousness and the rise of prejudice and new racist ideologies in the South from the Civil War to the present. These works focus on the mindset of the Ku Klux Klan and the basis of their ideologies, which held that the white race is superior to all others. Among the most significant of these studies are Betty Dobratz’s *White Power! White Pride! The White Separatist Movement in the United States*; David Wellman’s *Portraits of White Racism, Jumpin’*
Jim Crow edited by Jane Dailey, et al.; and Grace Elizabeth Hale’s Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940. This literature provides the ideological background for the women of the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacy. Prejudice, racist ideologies and white supremacy were the basis for the KKK and the WKKK; understanding the basic principle of white supremacy is vital as it constitutes the key component of the fundamental teachings of these organizations. In their book White Power, White Pride!, scholars Dobratz and Shanks-Meile discuss not only the KKK, but other white supremacist groups in the United States and the beliefs and ideologies that these groups had in common.

Sociologist David T. Wellman examined the idea of white racism to show how it is socially and culturally constructed and always defends the higher status of whites because of the history of racial segregation in the country. Editors Jane Daley, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore and Bryant Simon of Jumpin’ Jim Crow: Southern Politics From Civil War to Civil Rights dealt with the politics and racist ideologies surrounding Southern political affairs. These books are important to this study in that they examine racist beliefs, the foundation upon which the KKK was built, primarily in the South. Scholars such as Gilmore, Wellman, and Dobratz provide a better understanding of the ideologies and racist beliefs that Klanswomen used to promote white supremacy.

---


33 Dobratz, White Power, White Pride!


Historians view the second coming of the Klan in 1915 in a variety of different ways helping to expand understanding particularly of the demographics and rhetoric of the KKK. The early KKK of the late 1800s was largely focused on the South and ex-Confederates desperate to retain control over newly freed slaves. However, the second wave had much broader appeal to general Americans due in large part to the popular rhetoric used in Klan documents to attract a wider audience. Two particular scholars offer important interpretations. Leonard J. Moore’s *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921-1928* and Nancy Maclean’s *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* provide crucial background and statistical information for this thesis.\(^3^6\) The second Klan wave was largely dominated by religious undertones in which Quakers, Baptists, and Methodists participated in the white supremacy movement.\(^3^7\) The group expanded from a largely Southern rural following to include cities throughout the United States.\(^3^8\)

Moore’s work, *Citizen Klansmen*, is an important examination of the organization in Indiana during this time, a state where women had high rates of involvement. *Citizen Klansmen* focused on the Klan movement in Indiana, popular due to the state’s socially conservative and largely native-born Protestant population. Moore exposes the fact that the Klan had expanded its influence and reach from the Southern communities into urban centers throughout the United States, including Indiana. Moore’s work includes a demographical analysis of Klansmen


\(^3^7\) We know even Quakers participated in the white supremacy movement due to the participation of Quaker ministers including white supremacist messages in their sermons including Daisy Douglas Barr who later became an influential Klan leader in Indiana.

\(^3^8\) In a Klan catalog in which members could order robes and flags for their local klaverns, prominent cities throughout the United States are available including Detroit, MI, Washington, D.C., Polk Co., IA, and Pitman, NJ among others.
including their occupations in various cities in Indiana, their religious affiliations, and the membership and influence of Klansmen in incorporated, unincorporated, urban and rural areas.\(^{39}\) Moore’s goal was to examine the social characteristics of the Klan to understand members’ motives for joining the organization.\(^{40}\) Moore provided an understanding of the men’s organization during the 1920s, although he largely ignores women’s participation except for an occasional reference.

Nancy Maclean’s work, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, offers an important perspective on the Klan in the South that provides an important social and ideological background for understanding women’s roles in the Klan by explaining white supremacist men’s beliefs and environment. Maclean’s work reexamined the origins of the second wave in the South. Like Moore’s, Maclean’s work largely focused on the demographics of the organization but also examined southern Klansmen’s views of race, religion, class and social morality.\(^{41}\) Maclean found that although there was broad appeal among various social classes, the Klan had its roots in the middle class. This was, according to Maclean, a function of middle class male insecurity and the widespread belief that white men were losing social and political status in relation to African Americans.\(^{42}\) This was an important idea reflected in the publications and meetings of the KKK and later the WKKK. White supremacist men believed that the political enfranchisement of white women would protect the political supremacy of whites in the United States. Since Klanswomen were often influenced and led by Klansmen, an understanding of the ideologies and principles is important to understanding women’s involvement.

---

\(^{39}\) Moore, *Citizen Klansmen*.

\(^{40}\) Ibid., xii.


\(^{42}\) Ibid., 182.
Very few scholars ask or answer questions about the connection between gender and sexuality within the KKK. This thesis broadens the research in this particular area, but from a historical perspective. Kathleen M. Blee’s book, *Women in the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, offers a narrative account of the history of the WKKK, but ultimately remains focused on a sociological examination of the subject. Using sociological studies that deal with links between gender and sexuality, Blee’s work begins with an account of how women were involved in the KKK. Yet Blee does not fully examine women’s roles and does not view women’s participation in a historical context. Blee does discuss the origins of the WKKK and how women fit into these origins. Using an examination of female and male sexuality, she discussed gender roles, women’s roles in society and how gender played a part in the roles white supremacist women held within the organization. She outlines how women of the Klan rose to power within their own ranks. Blee’s work offers crucial background for this thesis. However, she did not thoroughly evaluate the primary documents published by the organization that illustrate women’s leadership roles. Instead, she draws primarily from her sociological background to examine gender and societal roles of the 1920s to examine women’s leadership positions within the Klan.

This thesis offers a deeper historical examination of primary documents produced by the WKKK and of their conflicting rhetoric and thus departs from the narrative and sociological examinations of the topic published by Blee and others. Previous Klan research deals predominately with primary and secondary sources related to the Ku Klux Klan, rather than the Women of the Ku Klux Klan. Research conducted for this thesis includes a large number of pamphlets written and published by the WKKK. These sources reveal that while women in the

43 Blee, *Women of the Klan*).
white supremacist movement acted as leaders, their primary duties were still understood by the authors to be domestic ones. Primary documents dating from the 1923 to 1927 offer the opportunity for examination of women’s changing roles in both the male-dominated Ku Klux Klan organization and society more broadly. While Kathleen M. Blee and others have viewed the WKKK in terms of sociology, this thesis offers a more explicitly historical perspective.

White supremacist women led meetings and rituals and published pamphlets encouraging women to use their power within the domestic realm to ensure white racial supremacy. Pamphlets such as “Constitution and Laws of the Women of the KKK,” “Ideals of the WKKK,” “Instillation Ceremonies,” and “American Women Americanizing America” outline gender roles for women within the Klan.44 These ideals were similar to those included in the nineteenth century Cult of True Womanhood and were centered on female piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity.45 Ideal Klanswomen were to be obedient and dutiful wives, caring mothers and pious, pure ladies. Despite the fact that women were expected to uphold these roles, they also held leadership positions within their own white supremacist organizations. These pamphlets are used throughout the chapters as illustrations of the roles and expectations of women within the 1920s American white supremacy movement.

Chapter One builds upon other studies that examine women’s roles in the struggle over suffrage and temperance and that helped to establish the roots for women’s political involvement in a variety of organizations, such as the WCTU and National American Women’s Suffrage


Association and includes the later establishment of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan. This chapter examines why and how female white supremacists were involved in the suffrage and temperance movements during the latter part of the struggle over the nineteenth amendment and alcohol consumption in the United States. White supremacist women’s involvement in these organizations and movements trained them for the leadership positions that they eventually took within the WKKK.

The suffrage movement was an important stage in the nineteenth century from which women worked beyond the home and in a more political realm. Many white supremacist women who later joined the Klan participated in the suffrage movement. The fight for suffrage was one over a century where women demanded political power for themselves. Many women viewed political involvement as their right and insisted on exercising their power to vote. White supremacists employed arguments both for and against suffrage on the basis of race. Some white supremacists believed that giving white women the vote was more important and should have come before or with the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment. On the opposing, anti-suffragist side both men and women believed that men would vote in the best interest of women. Although the Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed all adult women the right to vote, the Klan thought that the voting block of white supremacist women could overwhelmingly defeat African American women’s voting power. In fact, the KKK supported the Nineteenth Amendment and supported the enfranchisement of white women. This participation by white supremacist women in the suffrage movement helped bolster membership and leadership within the WKKK.

Female enfranchisement offered many women on both sides of the movement the opportunity to come together and express resentment over black male enfranchisement before their own, or, conversely, to argue that the only ones who were best equipped to run society were
educated white men. Ideas like these are important examples of the conflicting attitudes concerning women’s roles in the home and the public sphere in the early twentieth century. Should women be allowed to vote? If so, it would mean that they would have valuable input in how politics affected society and women’s roles within the general public. If not, it would resign women to their domestic duties as wives and mothers. Yet by the early twentieth century the Klan began to argue that women’s right to vote could further the aims of white supremacy in the United States by helping to elect KKK-friendly politicians and pass white supremacist legislation. These were important arguments expressed strongly from women in the KKK on the suffrage side of the issue and these will be discussed further in Chapter One. White supremacist women argued that if white women were enfranchised it would help maintain and perpetuate white rule in the United States.

Female participation in social and political movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries helped set the stage for white supremacist women’s involvement in the KKK and the WKKK. When the WKKK formed in 1923, they used arguments for political equality and against alcohol to garner popularity and recruit more members. The women of the WKKK emphasized their previous work within a number of their official documents and continued to fight for their causes within a white supremacist framework. Klanswomen’s participation in these progressive movements is significant because they took the messages and purposes of suffrage and temperance and integrated them into their cause of white supremacy. Using a warped sense of equality and betterment of their communities, Klanswomen manipulated the progressive movement to fit the goals of a supreme white race.

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on the organization of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan itself, including an examination of the primary documents of the organization from
the 1920s. This chapter examines several important questions. What was white supremacist women’s next step after their involvement in the suffrage movement? What were the requirements for joining the WKKK? How many women participated in the group? What were the meetings and activities like? The answers hold the key to understanding how the WKKK came into being, what women’s roles were in the Klan, how active they became in their organization, and how these roles were contradictory.

Chapter Two discusses the inner workings of the WKKK by examining documents that the WKKK published beginning in 1923 that include the ideals and goals of women’s roles within the national KKK and the smaller local branches of the WKKK and the Kamelia. Again, changing gender roles are exemplified by the actions of white supremacist women in the WKKK. By encouraging women to remain loyal to their husbands and families by raising white Christian children, the women of the WKKK could supposedly maintain a blissful home and remain within their assigned domestic sphere. This reinforced women’s domestic roles while also encouraging them to take political action through the WKKK.

The second chapter also discusses the roles of various officers and members of the organization and addresses the issue of how women’s participation varied from men’s. This chapter explores what took place during the meetings and socials gatherings. Since some women were officers within the WKKK they obviously engaged in political activism. Women could lead each other but were still to remain submissive to the leaders of the men’s organization in a number of respects. WKKK members could give orders to each other, but when it came to larger state and national activities, they still took orders from male officers of the Klan.

The second chapter offers a discussion of the organization and what women’s roles within the organization were. Throughout this chapter, the roles are juxtaposed against what
they actually did. The WKKK serves as an excellent example of how controversial the topic of women’s roles remained in the 1920s. On the one hand, they were expected to be the perfect wives, mothers, sisters and daughters. However, they could become leaders of each other, but their leadership positions mattered only in relation to other white supremacist women and within the domestic sphere.

Chapter Three discusses whether the WKKK had an impact on the downfall of the organization, and how women’s roles with the group affected the larger organization while examining white supremacist men’s treatment of the women, in particular the controversy surrounding one nationally recognized leader. Also included is an analysis of how the WKKK, and the Klan itself, began its demise in a world of changing racial ideologies. Women continued to move beyond boundaries of the home through their involvement in the political sphere. But, did this cause both the men’s group and the women’s auxiliary to fail? Was it because women were no longer in the home as often to continue to raise obedient Protestant children with white supremacist and racist ideologies? How did men view women’s changing roles within the group? These questions help to determine the degree to which debates about gender affected the white supremacist movement and whether such debates contributed to the second disintegration of the Ku Klux Klan by 1930. This chapter addresses how women’s involvement and treatment in the Klan as both women and as leaders ultimately led to deep rooted internal problems within the organization. The chapter argues that Klansmen conflicted and convoluted positions on women’s roles in society became a significant element of the ever-increasing problems that plagued the group by 1930.

This thesis offers a new perspective on women’s roles in the Ku Klux Klan, a subject that has not been fully explored by historians to this point. Women’s roles in the Klan were complex:
women’s participation in the Klan reinforced stereotypes but was also non-traditional. Women of the Klan assumed positions not only as part of the male-dominated organization, but particularly within the separate women’s auxiliary as well. The WKKK helped influence the men’s organization by building the home as a place around which the Klan could affix their ideals. Under the ideals of purity and piety these women reinforced the principles of one of the most notorious and dangerous racist, white supremacist groups ever to exist in this nation.
Chapter One:
Her Struggles of Yesterday: White Supremacist Women’s Participation in the
Suffrage and Temperance Movements in the United States

We women know what we want in our homes, in our neighborhoods, in our cities, in our states and in our
country and we have the privilege of voting so we may be able to get these things. - Unknown¹

Prior to their participation in the second wave of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, white
supremacist women involved themselves in a variety of political movements aimed at political
and social change. For example, women’s participation in the suffrage and temperance
movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gave them opportunities to learn
organizational and leadership skills. Training and participation in these movements helped
female members assert their ability to serve in the KKK and, eventually, to begin their own
organization in the early 1920s. Southern progressives, in particular, supported white supremacy
within their movements.² White supremacist women gained valuable knowledge from their
activities in the temperance and suffrage movements and used this experience to organize white
supremacist associations.

One of the earliest issues white supremacist women were involved in during the late
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the battle over temperance. The sale and
consumption of alcohol permeated the domestic sphere, so too did the perceived evils that came
along with it. These evils included threats to marriage such as divorce and domestic violence.
Women struggled to find a way to fight against the making and selling of alcohol and, in turn, to
protect their communities. White supremacist women argued that those who consumed and
distributed alcohol were primarily African Americans and immigrants, whom they associated

Publishing Company, 27 October 1923. Ball State University Library Special Collections.

² David W. Southern, The Progressive Era and Race: Reaction and Reform 1900-1917 (Wheeling: Harlan
Davidson, Inc.), 88.
with the moral decline of their communities. When targeting bootleggers and fighting in favor of temperance, their actions took on racist overtones. White supremacist women advocated against minority communities by including their racist arguments and ideologies in their temperance rhetoric. By ending the distribution of alcohol in their communities, these women believed they could continue to support white supremacy and the protection of their homes and children. Their efforts wrongly assumed it was solely immigrants and African Americans who were involved in the sale and consumption of alcohol.

In an effort to make their towns safer from the evils associated with alcohol, one goal of the KKK in the post-Civil War period was to rid their communities of it. With this in mind, the KKK made large financial donations to the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in many communities.³ Part of the popularity of the WCTU, besides their mission of temperance, was their original 1874 motto that read “For God and Home and Native Land.”⁴ This appealed to the KKK because members believed that those of pure white blood should lead the government and the country in the name of God and for the protection of the home. These sentiments were particularly true during the Reconstruction period when racial tensions ran high. These were basic premises of the original Klan. The nineteenth century KKK believed that only white men were fit to govern the country and therefore must protect women and the home from perceived outside threats. These threats included uprisings of African Americans, alcohol, and immigrants. The inclusion of the term “native land” appealed to the Klan ideology of nativism, _______________________

³ The Women’s Christian Temperance Union was a group of women dedicated to the eradication of alcohol within their communities. The group had several branches across the United States and was one of the most successful temperance unions in existence. The Klan supported the group monetarily through donations but it is difficult to know how much they contributed.

in which white Protestant natives would retain control of and uphold the government of the United States, oppressing immigrants and African Americans to the level of second class citizens.

Before some became Klan organizers, prominent white supremacist women acted as organizers of various chapters of the WCTU across the United States. Lulu Markwell, one of the first leaders of the national WKKK organization based in Little Rock, headed the Arkansas chapter of the WCTU for twenty years. Lillian Sedwick served as state superintendent and county director of the young people’s branch of the WCTU during the early part of the twentieth century. She later became an important WKKK leader and other women followed the same path. They included Myrtle Cook of Vinton, Iowa, a member of the WCTU murdered for documenting the names of illegal bootleggers, and Lillian Rouse, who found her activist start in the WCTU and its young people’s affiliate. Rouse eventually joined Sedwick in the WKKK Indiana affiliate. Another prominent woman who later joined the WKKK, Ellen Curtis, wanted to join the WCTU but refrained due to her husband’s drinking problem, yet she often lent her support to temperance causes.

---

5 Women’s Who’s Who of American: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Women of the United States and Canada, 1914-1915, (Gale Research Company), 540; Who’s Who in Little Rock: An Accurate Biographical Record of Men and Women of Little Rock, Arkansas, Prominent in Various Lines of Civic Activity (Little Rock, 1921), 96. These women are used as examples due to the fact that information and documentation still exists concerning their activities. This is rare, especially among Klan information due to the nature and secrecy of the organization. Generally, only information about prominent leaders in the WKKK exists. Therefore, information concerning regular members activities and the extent of their involvement is difficult to fully know.

6 Woman’s Who’s Who of America, 540; Who’s Who in Little Rock, 96.

7 Blee, Women of the Klan, 116-117.

8 Ibid., 117-118. It is difficult to find primary documents that explicitly state membership in both the white supremacist and temperance causes. Therefore, this study relies primarily upon Blee’s documentation of these memberships through individual women’s biographies and sources pertinent to specific female leaders. Blee relied on a number of sources including written records and personal interviews.
Even in communities active within the temperance movement that did not have members associated with the Klan, the WCTU often lent its support to Klan activities associated with alcohol.\(^9\) The WCTU recognized the vigilante law enforcement efforts of the KKK in many communities to cease and eradicate the sale of illegal alcohol by those considered to be bootleggers.\(^{10}\) Although the WCTU did not support the Klan’s racist agenda, many members and leaders of the WCTU helped support the Klan’s anti-alcohol agenda.

White supremacist women had protection of the home foremost in their minds because they were charged with guarding the home front. Their duties included the upbringing of the children. One way to protect the home and children was through vigilante law enforcement by white men willing to protect and uphold the virtue of white womanhood.

Along with purity and domesticity, alcohol threatened the demise of all that encompassed the Cult of True Womanhood, including women’s piety and submissiveness. If African Americans advanced socially or politically then white supremacists believed the purity of white womanhood became even more threatened. White women, they believed, would be subjected to violent actions, including rape at the hands of African American men.\(^{11}\) Women would lose their higher status in culture as objects to uphold and protect if their purity was destroyed.

In many communities during the Reconstruction period and first wave of Klan violence, the KKK acted as a publicly recognized, although extralegal, law enforcement group. As unofficial law enforcement officers, the members would often enforce the prohibition laws of the

---


\(^{10}\) Blee, *Women of the Klan*, 104.

In towns and cities where the Klan was unpopular, the WCTU continued to support the group because of its effectiveness in law enforcement and conviction of bootleggers and moonshiners, despite the intimidation and violence used in the investigations. These illegal tactics made the enforcement by the Klan particularly effective.

In many cases, when the KKK took the law into its own hands, they engaged in entrapment of buyers and sellers of alcohol and illegally collected evidence to prosecute the offenders. These offenders were most often those who had not paid the Klan for protection. This is an example of the hypocritical and contradictory tactics used by the Klan exemplifying the difference between their public image and private actions. These illegal tactics, however, eventually led to a split from more mainstream purity advocates, in part because of the risk of scandal associated with Klan tactics. However, the Klan argued that they acted in the best interest of their communities to protect white women from the dangers perpetrated by African American men. The split from the ideology of mainstream purity advocates is an example of how white supremacists warped temperance goals to suit their own purposes and argued for continued white dominance.

In addition to their roles in the private sphere, women actively took part in progressive movements. An example of women’s participation in these movements was Daisy Douglass Barr, a national figure of the WKKK. Her leadership skills were arguably forged in the suffrage and temperance movements. Barr, a Quaker evangelist, was a founder of the YWCA in Indiana.

---

12 Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 86.


14 It is difficult to know the WCTU’s reaction to the scandals that were associated with the Klan due to a lack of evidence.
and leader of the Queens of the Golden Mask.\textsuperscript{15} She conducted public campaigns, which started out chiefly as missions from church to church beginning when she was only sixteen.\textsuperscript{16} These campaigns led her to be an effective evangelist, who reached out to a variety of people from different social classes, including those who did not attend church.\textsuperscript{17} Her messages and causes were wildly popular among average white Americans, particularly the working class. In her efforts to get prostitutes and other “fallen women” off the streets and into a women’s shelters, she founded “The Friendly Inn” in Muncie, Indiana.\textsuperscript{18} Although this project ultimately failed, her work was nonetheless respected throughout her community and Indiana. Her work as an evangelical minister led her into politics in 1911 when she participated in her first temperance campaign.\textsuperscript{19} The Quaker church’s emphasis on social purity within their communities helped set the stage for her success in progressive movements. This ideology fell in line with the emphasis on purity within society during this time which included the eradication of prostitution, alcohol, and other vices that threatened moral decay within towns and cities across the nation. Barr spoke publicly on temperance issues from the pulpit of the Indiana church she attended and numerous other public forums.\textsuperscript{20} She was a fiery orator who could rouse her audience into active participation in the WCTU and like organizations. When speaking, Barr openly accused men who drank of being adulterers and gamblers, as well as consorting with prostitutes and young

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{15} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 106-8.
\textsuperscript{17} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 107.
\textsuperscript{18} Hoover, \textit{Daisy Douglass Barr}, 183.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 177.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 177.
\end{flushleft}
Her goal was not only to keep her community dry, but to also discredit those who continued to fight against temperance by associating them with debauchery.

Other Klan documents explicitly stated women’s ties to the temperance movement and their resolve to eradicate alcohol in their communities. In “Votes for Women: Some Reasons Why They Should Vote,” the anonymous author stated: “We know that we do not want a saloon on our corner, we can vote to keep our country ‘dry.’” The author exemplified the idea that women, if enfranchised, had enough power politically to keep alcohol out of their communities. Through the suffrage movement, these women encouraged each other and the male members of the KKK to make the world of politics more honest and less fraudulent and to help improve their communities by outlawing the consumption of alcohol. Members of the Klan held that this was part of women’s responsibility to bring morality back into politics. By voting for politicians who supported the prohibition of alcohol, the Klan’s goal of temperance would be fulfilled and women would have helped influence politics in a positive way. The push for temperance helped underpin the argument for women’s involvement in Klan activities on multiple social and political levels of the organization.

When the WKKK and the Kamelia formed in the early 1920s, these organizations adopted similar temperance principles from earlier groups such as the WCTU, including the eradication of alcohol within their communities. One of the oaths of the WKKK mirrored the ideology of past groups which encompassed a pledge to work toward the correction of evils in the community, including vices such as alcohol and prostitution that threatened the home, female

[21] Ibid., 182.

purity and chastity, and the family. Women were dedicated to the eradication of vice in the home and protection of the family, as well as the larger community. These ideals were similar to those of the temperance movement. Ridding the towns of alcohol not only made for a more pleasant community in the eyes of these women, but it also meant that one of the alleged roots of violence in the community would be cut off at the source and protection of their families and womanhood could take priority. Without the presence of alcohol in the community, women thought they would no longer have to worry about their husbands wasting their money on liquor and the threat of marital violence would be decreased.

By arguing that the evils of alcoholism rested with immigrants and minority communities, white supremacist women ignored the fact that a considerable amount of alcohol consumption existed within their own homes. During the 1920s, several female members of the WKKK later cited alcoholism and abuse as reasons for filing for divorce. However, recognition of the connection between alcohol and domestic abuse was an astounding accomplishment on behalf of these women and perhaps one reason why the League of Women Voters and the Women’s Christian Temperance Union supported the KKK’s stance on prohibition and temperance so willingly. One of the offenses listed in the Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan included drunkenness or being in an intoxicated condition. Male KKK members rebuked each other for spousal abuse and alcohol use and alcoholism.

23 Maclean, Behind the Mask of Chivalry, 99.

24 Clarke County Superior Court “Minutes 1914-1929” Books 46-52 (Atlanta: Georgia Dept. of Archives and History).


26 Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (Atlanta: Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., 1921), 89. Ball State University Library Special Collections.
risked ostracization by the group for engaging in either. This punishment fell in line with the ideal of family protection, however, it is difficult to ascertain if and how the violators were punished.

Publicly, and in published but undated documents, the Klan recognized the community loathing towards the organization for what members believed to be anti-vice efforts concerning temperance and other issues, not racist ideologies. One publication read in part:

The Klan does not attempt to regulate the private morals, family affairs, political or religious beliefs of any man. This being a true statement of the principles and purposes of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, the question naturally arises: Why this relentless war now being waged upon the order?...The activity and determination of the Klan to see the laws of this country respected and enforced has arrayed every crook and ever law-breaker down to the least and lowest, against the Klan. Every bootlegger, moonshiner, jake-seller, libertine, prostitute and black leg gambler feels that the life of their vicious business depends upon the putting of the Klan out of business.

Klansmembers viewed opposition to their organization based more from people they considered immoral troublemakers (i.e. bootleggers, crooks, African Americans), rather than other white Protestants. This was one other way of shifting blame and focusing negative stereotypes and problems upon African Americans to justify cleaning up communities by targeting specific groups. Klanswomen often later used this ideology in rallies, meetings and through pamphlets to remind members about their goal of clean and moral communities. Additionally, the documents served as a reminder that men should have been the protectors of the community from problems which threatened the home and family emphasizing that men “must realize that the safety, peace, and dignity of the country depends upon you and I.”

---------------------------------------------------------------------

27 Ibid., 89.

28 Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Principles and Purposes of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (np, nd), 5-6. Indiana Historical Research Foundation.

29 Ibid., 10.
The Klan contended that if immigrants and African Americans could be controlled through political, nonviolent and violent social means, then American government and rule would remain the hands of native white rulers. This argument became a firm part of white supremacist ideology surrounding matters not only of temperance, but voting as well. The Klan believed immigrants’ and African Americans’ behavior could be controlled through maintenance of white supremacy and white political power that would continue enforcement of temperance and prohibition laws. Women would continue their participation and influence by staying active in the temperance movement and continuing to support anti-immigrant, anti-black and temperance legislation.

One way in which the buying and selling of alcohol could be curbed, or even stopped, in local communities was through local and state legislation. Klansmen and women believed that if women were given the vote they could assist in the passage of laws pertaining to the protection of the home and family, including temperance and immigrant legislation. Keeping women’s traditional societal roles and expectations in mind, this was an example of how white supremacist men advocated for suffrage. In other words, they believed that as long as women used their political influence and tactics to ensure the protection of the domestic sphere then it was acceptable for women to be politically active.

In addition to temperance activism, women in the white supremacist movement found the tools for their activism in the women’s suffrage movement and later wielded these tools effectively when participating in white supremacist activities. White supremacist men and women argued that women’s vote could be a powerful tool for political change concerning race relations in the country. If white supremacist women had the right to vote, they argued, this would increase the chances of passing legislation to ensure the subjugation of African Americans.
and immigrants in all aspects of life, which would ensure they would remain second-class citizens.\textsuperscript{30} This would guarantee, they argued, that white supremacy could reign throughout the United States and thus keep African Americans in the roles prescribed to them by Jim Crow laws. This is evidenced through the white supremacist women’s participation in the suffrage movement and their outspoken encouragement that urged women to fulfill their duty as citizens. Although it is difficult to know how many eventual rank and file members of the WKKK took part in the suffrage movement, there is evidence that shows that many prominent white supremacist women participated in support of women’s suffrage. These included Daisy Douglas Barr, Robbie Gill Comer, Ann Carol, who later became a Klan leader in Indiana, Nancy Taylor, and Ellen Curtis, the majority of whom had also been involved in the temperance movement.\textsuperscript{31}

One of the reasons that the men of the KKK supported women’s rights to vote was the belief that women could bring about or forestall change through political action, particularly when it came to matters of race and making improvements in their community. Blee asserted that although Klansmen viewed women as subordinate, they still argued for political and legal rights for women to increase membership and participation.\textsuperscript{32} The Ku Klux Klan Katechism asked of Klansmen: “What is the attitude of the Klan toward women?” and their reply was: “The Klan believes in the purity of womanhood and in the fullest measure of freedom compatible with the highest type of womanhood including the suffrage.”\textsuperscript{33}

\begin{flushleft}
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{31} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 115-6.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 49.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\end{flushleft}
in the temperance movement, a call for an end to prostitution, the KKK’s goal of a less corrupt
government, and the maintenance of the white race in government.

One reason suffrage became so popular among women associated with the Ku Klux Klan
was that white supremacist women believed that if the vote could be restricted to white women,
they could save their nation from the perceived threat of racial mixing. In other words, the reign
of white supremacy would continue not only in the South, but return to the North as well. They
could reclaim land they thought was overrun by former slaves who threatened the racial
supremacy whites held in the nation for years. When the WKKK formed in 1923, racial purity
and supremacy became the most important beliefs of the organization and Klanswomen argued
that through women’s expanded political participation their goal could be fulfilled.34

Daisy Douglas Barr was, once again, one of the most influential white supremacist
leaders in the suffrage movement as well. Barr’s participation and encouragement during the
period from 1915 to 1920, when she was most active in her temperance and suffrage work, is
highlighted by Blee, who wrote: “Barr’s oratory combined opposition to alcohol with a call for
passage of the women’s suffrage amendment, a message that many of her female followers took
to heart.”35 As an outspoken and influential leader in her community, Barr made a connection to
her listeners through spirited deliveries concerning women’s voting power, as well as
temperance, as well as pushing for pro-suffrage, white supremacist-friendly candidates running
for office. Her message included an incorporation of women as an integral part of the church
ministry, a renewed effort to curb prostitution, gambling, and alcoholism, as well as a call for

34 Blee, Women of the Klan, 49-50.
35 Ibid., 106.
voting rights and political equality of women. Blee, writing about white supremacist women and suffrage, states that:

Rather than mimicking the men’s empty gestures of praise for ‘true American women’ in the past, the WKKK complained that women had been excluded from public politics throughout most of this glorious history…Klanswomen embraced the KKK’s racist, anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic agenda and symbols of American womanhood but they used these to argue as well for equality for White Protestant women.\(^{36}\)

Klansmen adopted a positive stance towards women’s equality as they realized the advantages of women’s political involvement through passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. To Klansmen, women were pure objects to be protected, but they could also spread the influence and power of the white supremacy movement by increasing membership numbers. The women of the organization argued that they had been ignored in politics because of the widespread social belief that men knew best when it came to politics. However, white supremacist women believed they could use their femininity, virtue, and purity as women to influence public policy and the political world for the better. Rather than have the ideals of the Cult of True Womanhood keep them in their acceptable roles, women used those same principles to advance themselves in society. They believed that women were more morally responsible and pious than men. Women used the argument of women’s purity and piety when arguing for a more active role in politics. As evidenced by their resounding successes in the temperance movement, women argued, if enfranchised they would bring morality and decency, two important qualities lacking in the political realm. They also argued that because women were primarily protectors of the domestic front, they should have a say in issues related to domestic matters.\(^{37}\) In short, because of their experience, they would have knowledge important to the protection of the home

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 35.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 49.
against outside forces, including the perceived threats from African Americans. While men were still considered the primary protectors, women believed they could contribute their knowledge to the protection of what they argued was true American womanhood.

Racism also became an issue in national suffrage organizations. Groups such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) supported using racism and white supremacist arguments in order to win suffrage for women.\(^{38}\) This tactic was appealing particularly in the South, where suffrage was adamantly opposed by most Southerners.\(^{39}\) Many of the suffrage leaders believed the cause would be lost if nothing could be done to obtain the support of Southern men and women. Using a race-based strategy seemed the best place to begin. They argued that the “negro problem”\(^ {40}\) could be solved by granting women equal suffrage. The “negro problem” referred to the fear that African Americans would achieve social, political, and employment equality and eventually seek the right to intermarry with whites, threatening the structure and stability of the white Protestant American family. By giving women the right to vote, this would increase the number of people opposed to integration and equality of African Americans. With so many African Americans in the South, Southerners worried that former slaves would seek revenge for mistreatment during slavery, that they would steal jobs from whites, and even prey on white women through physical and sexual violence. Some white southerners believed that there was no longer an effective way to control African


\(^{40}\) Ibid., 107. The “negro problem” additionally referred to the multitude of African Americans that remained in the South after the Civil War.
Americans as there had been during slavery even though segregation existed in every aspect of life. Thus granting suffrage ensured a way to retain control of African Americans.

When arguing for women’s suffrage on the basis of racism, Laura Clay, a Kentucky suffragist leader in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, wrote: “The question of white supremacy is one that will be decided by giving the right of the ballot to the educated, intelligent white women of the South…The South, true to its traditions will trust its women, and thus placing in their hands the balance of power, the negro as a disturbing element in politics will disappear.”41 In other words, giving white women the vote would counteract the enfranchisement of African Americans. Other white supremacist politicians argued to overturn the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.42

Southern suffragists also argued that if white women were enfranchised they could clean up the political scene and bring back honest government.43 They used examples of their participation and successes in the temperance movement to back up their arguments concerning their ability to influence American government and society for the better. Women, white supremacist women included, had been a powerful and effective influence in banning alcohol in communities. White supremacist women argued that they would bring back morality and purity back into American politics. After all, the protection of pure American womanhood was one of the most important ideals behind the existence of the KKK. White women argued that they would influence American politics in favor of keeping government in the hands of white men. If African American women were enfranchised as well, the large numbers of white women would

41 Ibid., 108. Despite the racist rhetoric Laura Clay had no known ties to the Klan, she was simply a prominent Southern suffragist.

42 Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race*.

undoubtedly outweigh their votes at the polls with no worries. The Klan believed white men would do the same in relation to black men and their vote, although neither idea seems logical. In short, with sheer power in numbers, Klansmembers would keep control over the American political scene; however they also employed other means to keep African Americans from voting.

Americans executed effective strategies to maintain white supremacy, particularly when it came to government. Jim Crow laws and customs were implemented in the United States, including poll taxes and literacy tests. Intimidation and fear through threat of physical violence by white supremacist men were also used to keep African Americans away from the polls in substantial numbers, just as they were used in illegal law enforcement by Klansmen during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. National suffrage leaders argued that many Southern states would enact poll taxes, literacy tests, and other restrictions against black women, just as they had with black men, to curb any threat to white voting dominance. White supremacy would remain and white supremacist women would have a stronger voice among the political scene to help assert and maintain white dominance in the government and in their communities.

White supremacist women’s participation in the suffrage movement also included membership in the League of Women Voters. The League was one of many national organizations white supremacist women associated with as members and through donations of time and money. The League supported women’s suffrage and advocated for the election of women to serve in politics on all levels. In one election held in Athens, Georgia, the League of Women Voters demanded to know the candidates’ position on prohibition in relation to

---

44 *Athens Banner Herald*, Atlanta. 8 January 1925, pp.1, 5; *Athens Banner Herald*, Atlanta. 21 January 1925, pp.1,8; *Athens Banner Herald*, Atlanta. 13 February 1925, pp. 1,6.
protection of the home.\textsuperscript{45} The League, like the Klan, held temperance and prohibition in high regard and often took candidates to task concerning their support of temperance during the early twentieth century. On at least one occasion in Athens, the League joined forces with the WCTU for a rally and conference on prohibition enforcement at an Athens church where the two presiding ministers were leaders of the KKK’s anti-vice efforts.\textsuperscript{46}

Along with their participation in suffrage organizations, many white supremacist women took an active role at the polls as well, despite their inability to actually vote in elections. This allowed women to be politically active without voting. Women associated with the KKK stood outside polling places and distributed propaganda literature promoting particular candidates.\textsuperscript{47} Although they did not yet have the right to vote, these women still hoped to promote the message of Protestant white supremacy by campaigning for particular candidates. Throughout Georgia, in Indiana, and across the nation during the early 1900s, women and men associated with the Klan helped vote out incumbents in favor of candidates who supported a pro-Klan agenda that included the curbing of prostitution, gambling, alcohol and white supremacy.\textsuperscript{48} One later example of a candidate that the KKK helped vote out of office was Mayor Andrew C. Erwin of Athens, Georgia in 1924. Erwin, a liberal and outspoken opponent of the Klan, lost to George C. Thomas, a candidate who supported the Klan and their moral purity political agenda including

\textsuperscript{45} Athens Daily Banner. Atlanta. 22 April 1922, 4; Athens Daily Banner, Atlanta. 21 November 1922; Athens Daily Banner. Atlanta. 13 December 1922, 4; Clarke County Superior Court, Minutes, Book 48, 19.

\textsuperscript{46} Maclean, \textit{Behind the Mask of Chivalry}, 106. It is not documented if the Athens elections were during the same year.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 17.

\textsuperscript{48} Searchlight, Atlanta. 24 March 1923, 4; Kourier, Atlanta. Dec. 1924, 29; Imperial Night Hawk, Atlanta. 14 May 1924, 7; Ku Klux Klan, \textit{Papers Read at Meeting}, 92. These Klan papers document instances in various towns in which political “successes” were recorded.
prohibition, tougher sentences for bootleggers, and a crackdown on prostitution.\textsuperscript{49} In many states during the 1920s, particularly Indiana, Klan members sat in high offices such as the state legislature, as well as governor, put in place by bribes and dirty politics implemented by the Klan.\textsuperscript{50} The KKK believed their success was due in part to women’s political participation and active role that helped Klan-friendly politicians get elected. However, due to lack of primary evidence, it is difficult to know if women were ultimately responsible for their victories.

While the men of the Klan often employed tactics of violence, one tactic women relied on to achieve their political goals was gossip and word of mouth. Gossip became an effective and powerful tool because it left no way to trace the rumors back to their sources, protecting the secrecy of the white supremacy movement and often providing them with a political victory.

Another way in which women associated with the Klan helped promote KKK-friendly politicians before and after they were granted the right to vote was a gossip circle called the “poison squad.”\textsuperscript{51} “Poison squads” consisted of women who passed along information, both true and false, about candidates not endorsed by the Klan. Examples of this tactic included rumors started concerning black migration North, papal visits that led to far-fetched ideas concerning Catholic takeovers, and personal and economic activities of Jewish residents in local Indiana towns.\textsuperscript{52}

Although it was a stereotypical tactic, men of the Klan were supportive of their use of this method relying again on women’s expected roles in the community. Poison squads were a powerful tool aimed at political change that women perpetuated and successfully used throughout Klan campaigns. As part of D.C. Stephenson’s vision of the Klan, each WKKK and

\textsuperscript{49} Maclean, \textit{Behind the Mask of Chivalry}, 102.

\textsuperscript{50} Evidence of the bribes and political scandals involving the Klan are discussed in Chapter Three in respect to the D.C. Stephenson scandal and trial.

\textsuperscript{51} Maclean, \textit{Behind the Mask of Chivalry}, 17.

\textsuperscript{52} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 149.
KKK chapter was required to create political committees where they collected information regarding each political candidate’s “race, ethnicity, religion, family background, and attitude toward the Klan.”\textsuperscript{53} They sent questionnaires asking candidates positions on abolishing parochial education, limiting immigration, and prohibiting liquor. These were prominent examples of white supremacist women’s political activism in their communities.

While the suffrage and temperance movements helped shape a variety of other organizations, the WKKK took to heart the messages of these movements. They incorporated the beliefs of more equitable society into their own organization in a way that the founders of these movements could never imagine and used their skills in ways contrary to the ideas of social and political equality. By the time the WKKK was founded in 1923, their own skewed beliefs on the importance of the temperance and suffrage movements to American women found their way into many documents published by the WKKK and their counterparts. White supremacist women used race and the skills they learned in the progressive movements to protect and uphold racial supremacy. The women of the Klan used their training and skills from these movements to form their own organization and promote the purity, piety and domesticity of white Protestant American womanhood. This led to the publication of documents similar to the constitution and ideals of the Ku Klux Klan, but with a new, more influential and outspoken role of American womanhood in mind.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.,146.
Chapter Two

100% True Blue American Women: How Women of the WKKK Reinforced and Challenged the Ideals of True Womanhood

Klanswomen all, what is the crowning glory of a Klanswoman? The crowning glory of Klanswoman is to serve- Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Women of the KKK reinforced the ideals of Victorian female piety and purity to uphold their supremacist principles of nativism, patriotism and racial superiority in the name of protecting and preserving the ideals of true womanhood. One of the main goals of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan was to “pledge our voice, our loyalty, our womanhood and our sacred honor” to enforce white supremacy. \(^2\) The WKKK based their organization around the ideals of women’s honor and the essence of their womanhood. Following an idea that was originally exemplified in groups like the Grand League of Protestant Women, the WKKK held that “pure Americanism[,] defense of its ideal and institutions[,] distinction between the races of mankind as decreed by the Creator[,] and the maintenance of White Supremacy” were their ultimate principles. \(^3\)

When white supremacist women’s subsects, like the WKKK, formed between 1922 and 1923, they offered new venues for women’s activism. Although these new groups encouraged women to get involved outside the home, they still emphasized roles that were socially prescribed to women. In their efforts to maintain the “Cult of True Womanhood,” the WKKK believed women should be pure, pious, and submissive to men. They believed in order to maintain femininity, women should remain in the home, stay true to the Protestant faith, and protect their home and family from a variety of outside threats. When examining official

---

\(^1\) Women of the Ku Klux Klan, “Ritual in the Second Degree of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan” (Little Rock: Women of the Ku Klux Klan Imperial Headquarters, 1920s). Indiana Historical Research Foundation.


\(^3\) Ibid., 3.
WKKK papers, there is an apparent contradiction in the rhetoric of the documents. The published materials encouraged women to become leaders of each other and within the WKKK, while at the same time reinforcing the notion that women’s place was in the home. A closer examination of these documents reveals contradictions between domestic roles women were expected to perform and new roles that challenged them to mobilize through white supremacist activism outside of the domestic sphere.

White supremacist women’s sub-sects, like the WKKK, formed during 1922 and 1923 and offered new venues for women’s activism in the white supremacy movement but still emphasized roles socially prescribed to women. These new leadership roles women assumed in the Klan paralleled those roles the women performed in several social movements during this time, for example the suffrage and temperance movements in which many white supremacist women found their activist roots.4

This chapter examines the contradictory roles of women within the KKK. These roles are explained in official documents published in the early 1920s and provide an outline of the roles women played in the organization. The documents set forth the ideals that Klanswomen were expected to uphold and the way they should fulfill their duties as wives, mothers and daughters of the KKK. Official documents of the WKKK offer insight into the positions women held in theory and the ways they were encouraged to maintain white supremacy in the United States. For the purposes of this project these documents are divided into two different categories: organizational and ceremonial.

4 Blee, Women of the Klan, 20. Blee discusses how several leaders of the WKKK particularly Elizabeth Tyler, one of the first female leaders, were active in other movements and groups of the time including suffrage, the Red Cross, and the Anti-Saloon League. According to Blee, Tyler and another woman helped to organize a new group to publicize these causes because they felt the women who were involved within these organizations would hold similar ideals of Christian purity and a race free nation.
Many pamphlets published by the WKKK for ceremonial and organizational use were based on similar KKK documents. Organizational documents include “The Constitution and Laws of the Women of the KKK,” “Installation Ceremonies,” “The Code of the Flag,” “Ideals of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” and “Objects Women of the Ku Klux Klan.” These documents outlined women’s roles within the WKKK and described the leadership and membership obligations of female Klan members. In 1923 the Women of the KKK drafted their own constitution and laws for each individual Klan group to follow. Although it is unknown who actually wrote the group’s constitution, it was primarily based on the KKK’s Constitution.

The WKKK Constitution included membership requirements, laws for each individual section, and leadership roles, which were all to be filled by women. While the WKKK Constitution contained many similarities to the KKK’s document, it directly targeted women and their place in the white supremacist movement. Article II, section I of the WKKK Constitution held that the purpose of the organization was to unite white, native-born women, to promote patriotism, “to shield the sanctity of the home and the chastity of womanhood” and to “maintain forever white supremacy.” Thus the WKKK Constitution held that women’s work was rooted in the private, female-dominated domestic sphere where they were expected to rear proper Protestant children.

---


6 Women of the KKK, “Constitution,” Cover page.

7 Ibid., 6.
One important ideal stressed in relation to women’s duties within the WKKK was the encouragement of wives, mothers and daughters to study “the vital questions affecting the happiness of the home, the welfare of the State, to the end that an intelligent co-operation may be effected with any and all Protestant organizations working for the protection of the American home, and the honor of American womanhood.”\(^8\) Women were to know what made their homes run smoothly, to keep their husbands happy, and to keep womanhood virtuous and pure. If they did anything to disgrace the honor and virtue of women, they could be banished from the organization. Examples provided in the WKKK Constitution of women disgracing this honor included using profanity, keeping a dirty home, committing adultery, or revealing the secrets discussed in meetings and rituals.\(^9\) The revelation of secrecy was, perhaps, one of the most severe infractions. Women punished offenders by ostracizing the woman in the private world of the Klan and in the community as well.\(^10\)

One of the ways in which women expected to participate in the organization was through specific leadership roles. These roles were part of women’s local and regional Klan organizations and similar national offices held by elected Klan leaders.\(^11\) One key position was that of the Imperial Commander, whose job was to be “the Supreme Chief Executive of this Order, [who] shall have and hold Supreme Authority and power under this Constitution in all executive and administrative matter.”\(^12\) The Imperial Commander was similar to a president and judge when it came to executive matters. Other leadership positions, according to the WKKK

---

\(^8\) Women of the Ku Klux Klan, “Objects Women of the Ku Klux Klan” (Little Rock, 1920s).


\(^11\) Male members had identically named positions with similar roles.

\(^12\) Women of the KKK, “Constitution,” 17.
Constitution, included what were deemed “Imperial Officers” such as the Klaliff (Supreme Vice President), Klokard (Supreme Lecturer), Kludd (Supreme Chaplain), Kligrapp (Supreme Secretary), and Klabee (Supreme Treasurer).\(^\text{13}\) While the responsibilities of these officers varied, they included such tasks as conducting meetings, guarding meetings, auditing organizational accounts, and issuing mandates, edicts and decrees.\(^\text{14}\) These leadership roles, on paper, elevated women to a status far beyond what they could ever hope for in the men’s organization. Unfortunately, it is still difficult to discern whether women’s leadership roles within the group really materialized due to the secrecy and lack of primary leadership documents for the WKKK.

Moreover, WKKK officers were to uphold the secrets of the Invisible Empire. According to the WKKK Constitution, the Invisible Empire “applies to all the secrets and secret knowledge and information, secret work and workings of this Order, and to all that has been, that now is and that is to be, the past, present, future, yesterday, today and forever.”\(^\text{15}\) Although the roles of various officers included upholding all the secrets handed down through the organization, the members also became the judge, jury and authority over all that happened within the organization. This is important because it meant that, in theory, WKKK leaders did not need to rely on men for any organizational or leadership responsibilities in their organization; they could rely solely on other white supremacist women concerning every aspect of their

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 50-55. The repeated use of the letter “K” seems to be used only for alliteration purposes.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 20-21. These roles are briefly described in these pages but a more in depth discussion of the duties and roles is included in Article XVIII on pages 50-55. Examples of the uniforms the officers in both the WKKK and the Tri-K club for teenage white supremacist women wore can be seen in Appendix One, figures 1.1 through 1.10; price lists for the items are available in figures 1.11 through 1.13; an additional picture of Klanswomen posing in their uniforms can be seen in figure 1.14.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 8.
organization. However, due to lack of primary evidence because of the secrecy of the organization, it is unknown whether this is the reality of women’s role in the organization.

The Constitution of the WKKK also established its own internal judicial system. Members heard cases of treason and sought to resolve disagreements concerning rules and roles within the women’s organization. This body was known in the WKKK as the Imperial Klonvokation, whose function was similar to that of the Supreme Court, although the Klan system took precedence in all judicial matters. This gave women the opportunity to be the judge and jury over each other. The Klonvokation met monthly, according to the Constitution, to deal with whatever matters arose. This was apparently an arena for women to exercise complete control over matters within their organization without being subjected to the authority and scrutiny of male leaders. The WKKK Constitution held that Klonvokation “shall have original jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to amending this Constitution and Laws and the regulation, government, and general welfare of this Order.”16 The Klonvokation settled all regional disagreements and pressing matters in relation to the WKKK depending on which realm members served. The organization was divided to deal with issues at the national, regional and klan groups.17 The Imperial Commander, the head of the governing body, judged all that passed before the all-female court.

Believing that women could punish each other more properly than the men could, punishments were left in the power of the Imperial Klonvokation, whether it was by realm or region. Offenses included treason against the United States, disrespect of virtuous womanhood which included doing anything to disrespect or disgrace the honor of femininity, “being

16 Ibid., 11-12.
17 Ibid., 32-39.
responsible for the pollution of Caucasian blood through miscegenation or the commission of any act unworthy of a Klanswoman,” the repeated use of profane language, and the failure to follow the rules and regulations set forth by the Constitution of the WKKK. In other words, if women did anything to shame themselves or the organization, they could face extreme punishments, such as becoming a complete outcast. Other punishments included being reprimanded, suspension, banishment forever, and complete ostracism by the entire WKKK and all of its members. If a woman violated the codes within the Constitution severely enough, she could risk exclusion from her all-white community and lose an entire network of support. While little is known about how often these women exercised their power, the fact that a document existed outlining women’s exercise of power within the organization is a reflection of how women perceived their status within the group.

The WKKK Constitution also set membership requirements, which included that members must be native born white women, who had no other ties to any government or nation other than the United States. WKKK members had to be at least eighteen years of age, of good and reputable moral character, Protestant, and a resident of the Klan jurisdiction in which she was applying. Women could apply for membership in the WKKK and for citizenship with the Invisible Empire. Thus the WKKK and KKK presented themselves as more than just organizations; they also conceptualized members as forming an entirely new country in which white leaders reigned supreme. The new members, if accepted, would be considered a part of

---

18 Ibid., 56-7.

19 Ibid., 58. No rules or regulations regarding physical violence as punishment is listed and it is not known if women punished each other in violent physical means for breaking rules of WKKK Constitution.

20 Ibid., 10. Applications for membership, membership cards, and forms to transfer to another Klan realm in case of relocation can be seen in figures 1.15 through 1.19 of Appendix One.
an all-white nation, whose citizens were striving to save their country from the perceived threat of immigrants, Catholics, African-Americans, and others who did not believe in white supremacy.

The WKKK honored women’s inadvertent contributions to the KKK by having been dutiful and good wives and mothers. All new applicants to the Invisible Empire had to pay a five to ten-dollar fee, depending on the local requirements, for a robe and helmet, with the exception of women who were wives of members of the original KKK during the period of Reconstruction. Because of their husbands’ contributions to the ideals and goals of the Klan during that time, such women could be admitted for free, provided they met the other membership requirements.

The WKKK Constitution also outlined the requirements for various paraphernalia including robes, flags, and seals used during meetings, parades, ceremonies and other official capacities. This paraphernalia mimicked the men’s and was used by women in their activities and joint activities, including parades and rallies. Additionally, the establishment of various realms, revenues, and property titles were summarized in the WKKK Constitution.

The WKKK also established a calendar for the organization that included the re-classification of days, weeks, months and even years. The year of the Klan began in June and the twelve-month cycle started with December, although the exact purpose of this set-up for ritualistic purposes remains unclear, not to mention illogical. The days were entitled as follows: Desperate, Dreadful, Desolate, Doleful, Dismal, Deadly, and Dark; the weeks: Weird,

---

21 While this may seem like anti-US sentiment, the idea was to “reclaim” the United States and keep it under white rule.

22 Women of the KKK, “Constitution,” 11. The monetary amount for dues was also the same for men of the KKK as well.

23 The official seal can be seen in figure 1.20 in Appendix One.
Wonderful, Wailing, Weeping and Woeful; and the months: Appalling, Frightful. Sorrowful, Mournful, Horrible, Terrible, Alarming, Furious, Fearful, Hideous, Gloomy and Bloody.\textsuperscript{24} Although it is difficult to know why they established these particular months and named them this way, it is an example of how white supremacist women viewed the world in which they lived. The names of these days, months and years, reflected the state of fear and foreboding within the movement. Klanswomen, like Klansmen, believed that American society was being overrun by African Americans and immigrants who constantly threatened, among other aspects of American society, the sanctity of womanhood through physical and violent means.

Outlining their duties and responsibilities, “Installation Ceremonies,” published by the WKKK circa 1923, is a pamphlet that described the induction ceremony of officers in great detail. This pamphlet offers insight into the rituals of initiation of various officers and members of the WKKK, including their oaths of service and obligations as particular officers. “Installation Ceremonies” also highlighted the use of particular sacred items used in various ceremonies and their importance to the Klan. The ceremonies and roles women fulfilled in these positions are examples of how powerful women could be in various roles within the organization and how these roles imitated those of the men’s group. The pamphlet contained an interesting and important announcement, addressed to all the Knights of the KKK. It read in part: “The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan does not promote, encourage, teach, direct, support or suggest violence or unlawful activity either publicly or privately.”\textsuperscript{25} This implied, at least to the public eye, that the KKK and its auxiliaries wanted to change the image of the vicious violent white supremacist group. Seemingly they were a group that believed the white race was superior, but

\textsuperscript{24} Women of the KKK. “Constitution,” 66-7.

\textsuperscript{25} Women of the KKK, “Installation Ceremonies” (Little Rock1920s) Michigan State University Library, 17.
nonviolent. However, there was a contradiction in this message. On the following page was a quiz that asked: “Will white people in America become outnumbered by blacks, Mexicans, and Orientals in 60 years?” The answer read:

True. A commission sponsored by the U.S. government estimates that because of high nonwhite immigration and birthrates you will become outnumbered, out-voted, and out-moded in your lifetime. That is, unless…YOU ACT NOW!26

This is a paradox between the idea that members of the KKK were encouraged not to commit acts of violence and the command to “Act now!” to “save” their country. This could mean a number of things, including violent action against others who were not white Protestants, in the name of patriotism. It could also encourage women to band together to discuss further action to be taken in a non-violent manner. However, even if the WKKK or the KKK conducted violent activities, the code of conduct outlined in the Constitution required absolute secrecy surrounding the particulars of these actions.

The pamphlet also prominently featured the racism and propaganda of KKK teachings. Klansmen insisted that immigrants and African Americans bred uncontrollably, threatening the white race by the expanding number of non-white citizens of the United States. If it was true, as Klan members argued, that there was a growing non-white population, then eventually this population could threaten the ruling white government by overwhelmingly voting in African-Americans and immigrants to serve in politics. While motherhood was held in high esteem within the Klan fraternity, it was never suggested in Klan documents that the solution to the perceived problem of rising immigrant and African American populations was to increase birth rates among white Protestants.

---

26 Ibid., 18.
Women of the Klan were expected to uphold other values and ideals as dedicated Klanswomen. Patriotism was one of the most important virtues emphasized within the organization. Various publications, including a pamphlet entitled “The Code of the Flag,” stressed patriotism. The code was a requirement adopted at the National Flag Conference held by the WKKK in Washington, DC in June of 1923. The American flag represented the country to which women were loyal and dedicated to protect. However, women of the Klan took their commitment to the flag further than most by holding it up as a sacred item in many of their rituals, including new member orientation, funerals, and meetings, as well as in their daily activities. According to “The Code of the Flag,” “we [the WKKK] emphasize devotion to the flag of our country as the ensign of our American nationality and the emblem of national honor.” Citing Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan, the WKKK proposed that their organization follow state flag laws during all Klan events. Another portion of the pamphlet explained what the colors of the flag, “Red is for valor, zeal and fervency; the white for hope, purity, cleanliness of life and rectitude of conduct; the blue, the color of heaven, for reverence to God, loyalty, sincerity, justice and truth.” Within the colors of the stars and stripes, the Klan found a creative way to express its own purposes, principles and ideals. “The Code of the Flag” was not simply a suggestion of ideals that Klansmembers were encouraged to follow. In

---


28 This would include things such as making sure the flag was displayed and flown properly at home, in the church and at school.


30 Halter v. Nebraska. 1907. The justice ruled that the state was entitled to restrict property rights for the purpose of fostering nationalism. The case was based on the selling of beer bottles with the American flag on the bottle. The justices ruled that if an item was promoting nationalist ideas, such as those of the KKK, then it was illegal. http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org.

addition, it was a strict set of rules and guidelines by which members were expected to display the American flag.

Moreover, having the opportunity to be a color bearer at meetings and parades was another way that the WKKK emphasized patriotism. In one article of The Kluxer magazine, “The Thrill That Comes to a Color-Bearer,” a Klanswoman from Montgomery County, Ohio, described her pride and joy at being picked to carry the American flag at the Woman’s Konklave. The writer emphasized the dedication and heartfelt loyalty to the United States that Klanswomen saw as part of their patriotic duty to uphold.

While the “Constitution of the WKKK” established the rules and regulations by which the WKKK was to exist, other documents clarified the ceremonies and customs of the organization. These rituals and rites described in the WKKK pamphlets were an important part of the WKKK. Within the WKKK ceremonies women assumed powerful leadership positions as officers. Several documents addressed the exact order of business and conduct during meetings and ceremonies. “The Kloran” or ‘Ritual of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan’ is one document that discussed the order of all rituals and ceremonies that were to take place in a regular meeting of the WKKK. This document included the order in which business was to be conducted and the discussion of various committee work, bills, and applications for new citizenship within the order. WKKK meetings were to include discussion of regular business, induction, or naturalization, secret work, reading and approving of minutes, general business and bill reports. The format of these meetings was similar to the way in most club or organizational meetings are held.

---

32 See figure 1.21 for a cover view of The Kluxer.
The pamphlet, “Objects Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” further emphasized the purpose of preserving the ideals of the WKKK and the maintenance of white supremacy. According to this document, the WKKK was established to provide a common ground for Protestant women to better the conditions within the home and church—women’s most important worlds.33 This pamphlet set forth women’s expected roles but contradicted the roles women actually held as leaders. The women of the KKK also advocated women’s participation in the study of politics and voting practices. However, this advocation was in the name of further protecting the home, American children and to positively affect the church. These proposals were part of the original emphasis of the WKKK, particularly stressed by Daisy Douglass Barr. Other ideals reinforced in this pamphlet included allegiance to the government and the flag, a return of the Bible in the public school system to instill ideas of Christian Protestantism in children, and the advocacy of strict immigration laws to protect the English language and white Americans.34 These were further examples of the arguments and beliefs of the WKKK in relation to women’s ability to positively affect the white supremacist movement. Women’s political participation through voting could ensure that these ideals were upheld.

Numerous WKKK published documents described the duties of women during various rituals and ceremonies of the WKKK. Documents of this type included “Ideals of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” “Kloran of the Women of the KKK: Ritual for the First Degree Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” “Ritual in the Second Degree of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” “Second Degree Obligation First Section,” “Ritual of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan Konservator,” and “Funeral Rites.”35 These rituals were instances in which Klanswomen

33 Women of the Ku Klux Klan, “Objects Women of the Ku Klux Klan” (Little Rock, 1920s).
34 Ibid.
implemented ideals and, in theory, where women took on leadership roles within the organization.

One document that reinforced and implemented the ideas found in the WKKK Constitution was “Ideals of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan.” This was based on a similar document published by the Ku Klux Klan entitled “Ideals of the Ku Klux Klan.” The document further established the mission of white supremacy. Although the document stated that the members of the organization were not “enemies of the colored or mongrel races” and that they “sing no hymns of hate against the Jew,” it stated that the WKKK was “a white women’s organization, exalting the Caucasian race and teaching the doctrine of white supremacy.” The WKKK believed Protestantism held the tenets of true Christianity arguing America was a nation founded by Protestants for Protestants. The Klan viewed any other religion with a wary eye, in particular Catholicism, and as a mere imitation of the truth. Klan members believed that America was established by Protestants to protect their religion from the growing influence of the Catholic Church and that America should forever remain a nation under the rule of white Protestant men. One of the main complaints against the Catholic Church was the hierarchical structure of Catholicism, ruled over by the Pope and therefore the church was not.


37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.
in the hands of “proper” white Americans.39 Klan members also charged that the Catholic Church was a breeding ground for Communists and that the combination of “‘commercialism’ and Catholicism in America was paving the way for communism.”40 Klan leaders argued that the political influence of Catholics over American affairs was placing American values in danger. The root to all these problems was the large amount of immigrants and non-whites Catholics in the United States and abroad, a nativist philosophy. WKKK pamphlets argued that rampant sexual depravity existed among Catholic priests and it was not a proper and moral religion.41 The allegations of sexualized priests allowed the WKKK and KKK to claim that white Protestant women needed to be protected from the evils of the Catholic Church and its religious patrons.

Two other brochures published during this time by the Kamelia addressed women’s roles in the maintenance of white supremacy in the United States, but contradicted the message that Klansmembers often espoused about Catholics. Frankie Jolsom Jones’s “Joan, the Militant Kamelia” and “Dreaming and Doing” used a surprising amount of Catholic imagery to emphasize women’s roles and duties to white supremacy while venerating Catholic ideals including references to Catholic imagery. In “Joan, the Militant Kamelia,” Jones discussed Joan of Arc and her dedication to France and the voices she claimed to be the word of God, who supposedly called her into action to defend France. Similarly these voices, according to Jones, called native Protestant women, like those in the Kamelia, to take action to defend their own country. Using powerful rhetoric, the white supremacist author wrote: “These voices at once

40 Ibid., 96.
challenge and command…the Women of America to the defense of their homes, their country and their creed." Joan of Arc, like other women of the past, received one of the highest honors bestowed upon pure and virtuous women dedicated to their cause, she could hear the voice of God. Jones argued that the voice that appealed to Joan of Arc, also appealed to all American women to protect and defend their homes, as well as their country. Women truly dedicated to piety and purity would rise to the challenge of protection of the domestic front. The use of Joan of Arc is truly ironic due to her veneration in the Catholic Church as a saint. The Klan ignored the fact Joan of Arc was a Catholic icon, choosing instead to focus on her protection of France through any means necessary. Women were expected to follow in Joan’s footsteps, but from a nativist perspective. Instead of threats like an English invasion, Jones implied that white Protestant women should rise up to defend their country against “foreign” invaders like African-Americans, Jews, Catholics, non-Anglo and non-Protestant immigrants who flocked to America during this time.

Using Catholic imagery to reinforce women’s roles, other pamphlets were published by the Kamelia. Another pamphlet authored by Jones, “Dreaming and Doing” told the fictional tale of a young artist in Italy who met a female American tourist who gave ambition and meaning to his art. The tourist called the artist several times over the years to inquire about whether he had begun his painting the “Madonna of the World,” another Catholic symbol of an important woman, like Joan of Arc. As time passed his model grew old and he lost his inspiration. In the last part of the story the artist died and the American tourist went to visit his grave where she met an Italian tourist who modeled clay for a living. She wondered if it was not better to model clay

than to hope for a “Madonna of the World” who would never exist. The rejection of the “Madonna of the World” could be a dismissal of Catholicism and the Catholic Church’s veneration of the Virgin Mary. In relation to the Kamelia’s message this could mean that perhaps it was better to shape what existed (i.e. the children and the home), rather than change the entire outside world. In white supremacist ideology, women could be responsible for the upbringing of the children and men would deal with the problems in the world. Jones wrote: “There is a marvelous vision in the eyes of American womanhood. It is the that of the white race supreme on the American continent…of a nation virtuous and invincible through the evangelism of Christianity.”

The vision also included secure homes and organized society, which would be a reality as a result of the work of American women. The dream of a pure white nation could be realized if American women continued to uphold their homes and raise proper Protestant children, despite the fact that the tasks assigned to them might be humble.

This comparison of Joan of Arc and Madonna of the World created a major contradiction. Groups like the Kamelia and the WKKK emphasized Protestant religion, but used Catholic imagery in some of their publications to call attention to how women could defend their country against what they perceived to be foreign invaders. Catholics were frequently portrayed in WKKK publications as a threat to white supremacy in the United States. The KKK considered Catholics to be no better than African-Americans and immigrants, in part because of their large number and their expanding influence throughout America. Furthermore, they unrealistically blamed Catholics for taking the Bible out of the classroom as a textbook. Their reasoning being

---


44 Both “Joan” and “Dreaming” emphasize Catholic imagery that is seemingly contradictory to Klan beliefs. In fact, in Blee’s book on page 93 there is a anti-Catholic cartoon that portrays a “convent kidnapping.”
that Catholics dominated the American population and politics during the early twentieth century. Catholics were viewed by the Klan as a dominant political force that was changing American ideals to fit Catholic, not Protestant standards.

Another pamphlet, “Ritual of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan Kriterion Konservator” dealt with a secret ritual of the WKKK that involved membership and other activities that took place at meetings. The ritual was religious in nature. It again reinforced women’s roles within the larger Klan as mothers, daughters, sisters and wives, by stating that “[w]henever patriotism calls, we Women of the Ku Klux Klan will respond for the service of our God, our Country, our Flag, our children and our children’s children ever holding Jesus Christ to be our Greatest Criterion.”

Other documents like the “Second Degree Obligation” and the “Second Degree of the Women of the Klan” were published with similar information to that of “Ritual of the Women of the KKK Kriterion Konservator.”

“Women of America! The Past! The Present! The Future!” was a document published by the WKKK that described women’s goals of the past and present and what future goals of the organization should include. The “Paramount Principles” section of this pamphlet was stated “AMERICA FIRST: First above all other Nations on Earth, first in thought and first in our love and affection; the Flag of our Glorious Country, the Star Spangled Banner, first and foremost before all other Nations or Principalities.” The WKKK revered the flag in part because “it was a woman who gave the American Nation its flag.”

The image of Betsy Ross reinforced the Klan’s ideal of women’s proper role as mother and wife on the home front performing noble


46 Women of the KKK “Women of America! The Past!, The Present!, The Future!” (Little Rock: Imperial Headquarters of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s) Indiana Historical Research Foundation, 10.

47 Ibid., 10.
domestic duties. The KKK and all of its sub-sects claimed to be extremely patriotic and felt an overwhelming need to protect their country from foreign nations and people. Strangely absent from the images used by the WKKK was the Confederate flag, a symbol that is often associated with present-day Klan organizations.\(^{48}\) However, the WKKK found plenty of other objects to symbolize their commitment and dedication to the idea of an America in which the white race continued to dominate and rule the country and its people.

Furthermore, “Women of America! The Past! The Present! The Future!” served as a reminder concerning the true roles women should uphold within the Klan. The inset of the pamphlet read: “We will gladly welcome all good women, who can qualify for membership, to join us in our efforts to promote the objects and ideals set forth herein. Here woman reigns the mother, daughter, wife.”\(^{49}\) These women, although members of a female led group, were expected to think of themselves first as mothers, daughters and wives. Women could fulfill the duties and obligations described in their pamphlets by being honorable women and playing their prescribed societal roles in the domestic sphere. This reemphasized women’s roles in the home while still influencing politics by advocating for protection of children and the home. Once again it reminded women that they played an important part of the white supremacy movement, but should keep their work confined to the home and family as often as possible.

In “America for Americans,” the WKKK reemphasized their constitutional ideal of keeping America in the hands of native-born white Protestants. The group highlighted the importance of white supremacy in their eyes, and the accomplishments of men such as George Washington, Ben Franklin, Daniel Boone, and surprisingly, Abraham Lincoln. The Klan skewed

\(^{48}\) It is probable that the Confederate Flag was not adopted as a symbol until the 1950s to remind people about the original founders of the KKK, all former Confederate soldiers.

\(^{49}\) Women of the KKK, “Women of America!,” Cover page.
Abraham Lincoln’s image and rhetoric, arguing that he believed African Americans were an inferior race and opposed granting them equal rights.\textsuperscript{50} This pamphlet stressed the importance of being a native born Caucasian in order to be a part of the organization. Emphasis on the purity of the American race as a “pure” blood line was important to the WKKK so that “a sacred heritage [could] advance and take its place at the forefront of all nations in the world, where purity, Christianity, peace and prosperity reign supreme.”\textsuperscript{51} They also believed that “the current of pure American blood must be kept uncontaminated by mongrel strains and protected from racial pollution.”\textsuperscript{52} Racial purity was thus of the utmost importance in the minds of the WKKK and women could maintain the white race by continuing “pure” blood lines.

Also included in “America for Americans” was an appeal to Americans uncomfortable with and suspicious of the large influx of immigrants making their home in America during the 1920s. According to the pamphlet, America was a utopia for the poor and oppressed to enter and find riches while maintaining allegiance to their own nations.\textsuperscript{53} The WKKK argued that the organization stood for the protection of America from these foreigners and for the protection of white American heritage. This appealed to a large number of Americans who had fears concerning immigrants and likely led to increased membership in the Klan. The pamphlet also included a listing of beliefs and creeds of Klanswomen so people reading the pamphlet would have a better understanding of the organization as it was portrayed on paper. Furthermore, it was a reminder to the American people that only “native-born” Americans could be eligible for membership in the Invisible Empire.

\textsuperscript{50} Maclean, \textit{Behind the Mask of Chivalry}, 133.

\textsuperscript{51} Women of the KKK, “Women of America!,” 3.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 6.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 3.
Focusing on the call for equality, WKKK Imperial Commander Robbie Gill Comer, was an important influence in the writing and publication of brochure in 1923 or 1924 entitled “The Equality of Women,” based upon biblical principle and scripture. Comer was a powerful and controversial force in Klan politics in Arkansas during the rise of the second Klan. Her leadership in the Arkansas Klan came about through controversial circumstances. Before she was married to Judge James Comer, she became an active member in the Klan in 1923. After an internal coup of the WKKK, the Arkansas Imperial Commander was replaced, and Robbie Gill, who was not the logical predecessor, took over. This led to numerous rumors among Klansmembers surrounding Judge Comer’s ties to the WKKK and questioned the groups autonomy from the men’s group. Comer and Gill married shortly thereafter further intensifying the rumors that the WKKK was not an independent group, but was instead secretly controlled by men. This is a key example of the fact that women may only have been at the forefront of the organization in theory. Judge Comer was an influential political force within the men’s organization, and obviously powerful enough to influence appointed leadership within the women’s group.

54 A picture of Robbie Gill Comer can be seen in figure 1.22. Comer was an important leader in the WKKK in the early 1920s.

55 Blee, *Women of the Klan*, 60.

56 Ibid., 60.

57 Robbie Gill Comer eventually succumbed to speculation and rumors surrounding the handling of WKKK funds by her and her husband. Although she had a significant support from Hiram Evans, the powerful Klan leader, the rumors concerning the WKKK finances warranted a trial in Arkansas. Robbie Gill Comer was acquitted of charges of squandering more than $70,000 worth of WKKK funds after a legal battle in 1924 between members of the WKKK and the Comers. However, the suit had a long lasting impact upon the Comer’s legitimacy among Klan members and adversely affected membership numbers in the Arkansas region they controlled. The controversy surrounding Gill Comer and her husband helped contribute to the negative public portrayal and internal corruption of the Klan.
Despite internal rumors surrounding her husband’s influence over her appointment, during her tenure in office, Robbie Gill Comer was an outspoken and articulate writer and speaker. In “The Equality of Women” pamphlet, Comer gave credit to the feminist movement for its influence in suffrage and education. However, according to Comer, the time for the organizations that grew out of the feminist movement had come and gone and the WKKK had emerged instead as the organization that “should solidify the women of America and accentuate and direct their new freedom as can be done by no other agency.” Comer held that the WKKK was “an institution that would reaffirm and vitalize the genuine essence of equality for which men and women of vision have so long contended; that [it] will strive to better fit women for their new responsibilities that they have inherited simply because they are women.” She viewed these responsibilities to include raising white children with the teachings of the KKK and making America a supposedly cleaner and more pure place to live for white Protestants.

Relying heavily on symbols, the WKKK were concerned with the religious nature of many of their items they used in ceremonies, particularly in a document entitled “Kloran of the Women of the KKK.” Important items within this document were the seven objects which the WKKK honored in their rituals, each with a special significance. The Bible was used as a “reminder of the tenets of Christian religion and a Klanswoman’s law of life.” The fiery cross was a symbol of the crucified Christ. The American flag was represented as a symbol of womanhood and a representation of the Constitution of the United States. The feminization of

58 Women of the KKK. “The Equality of Woman” (Imperial Headquarters of the WKKK, 1920s) Indiana Historical Research Foundation, 16.
59 Ibid., 16.
60 Women of the KKK, “Kloran” (np, 1920s), 11.
61 Ibid., 11-12.
the flag is symbolic because the Klan argued the flag represented the United States and because they believed the country to be under attack, they associated this attack with the alleged assault on white womanhood as well. Both women and the flag were to be protected and upheld as symbolic replicas of the nation. The sword represented law and enforcement as well as the military and executive powers of the government. Water was the symbol of life and purity and the mask was a symbol of secrecy, an important element of any Klan activity. According to the pamphlet “Ritual in the Second Degree of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan,” water also represented women’s duty to “keep our hearts pure, our conduct clean, and our consciences clear, and ever work in the unity for the noble purposes to which we are dedicated.” The last item of significance was the robe. According to the Kloran the robe symbolized “purity and equality. It signifies that we do not judge a woman by her garments. There are no rich or poor.”

Furthermore, “The Kloran” described the symbolic importance of specific objects such as the copper penny and the sand filled hourglass, which held special significance in rituals performed by the women of the Klan. The penny served as a reminder to keep church and state separate, an interesting contradiction considering the WKKK’s push to keep the Bible in public display and in the classroom. These are clear contradictions in Klan rhetoric that encouraged Klan members to fight for establishing Christianity in a state and public funded institution, an obvious infraction on the separation of church and state. In addition to its use in keeping time

---

62 Ibid., 13.

63 Ibid., 13-14.


65 Women of the KKK, “Kloran,” 15. Examples of various robes for officers and members can be seen in Appendix One.
during the meetings, the hourglass also served as a reminder that the women should be loyal to their homes and husbands, as well as their communities. To emphasize this, the Kriterion Konservator Degree read:

> So long as the sands of time run through the American hourglass, whenever Patriotism calls, we Women of the Ku Klux Klan will respond for service of our God, our Country, our Flag, our children and our children’s children, ever holding Jesus the Christ to be our Greatest Criterion. 66

The pamphlet held that God was the leading and deciding factor in everything the women did in their rituals and that the majority of their work should revolve around Protestant teachings and interpretations of the Bible. Through religious piety and purity, women were to influence their families and communities on behalf of white supremacy. This included leading female meetings and gatherings in the name of Protestant morality, as well as emphasizing the Klan’s idea of Protestant values in nearly every published document.

Purity and piety were two of the bases of true womanhood.67 It was important for women of the Klan to be both of good virtue and of the Protestant religion. According to the Kloran:

> Both organizations [the WKKK and the KKK] are exerting their every effort to preserve the chastity of womanhood and it must be the Klanswoman’s especial duty to do all she can to protect innocent young womanhood and to lend a helping hand to the fallen. 68

The fallen included prostitutes, women who engaged in premarital sex, women who participated in extra-marital affairs, and others who further tainted the purity of proper womanhood.69 By protecting other young women, the WKKK sought to preserve the ideals of true womanhood by

---


67 Although “true womanhood” is not a term that Klanswomen use in any of their pamphlets, the tenets they describe a part of a historical ideal that is currently used to describe women’s roles during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.


69 Ibid., 34.
restoring fallen women to purity and virtue. Younger women held the key to raising future generations of white supremacist children. The rhetoric in the “Kloran” supported the conflicting ideals that existed in the WKKK when it came to their roles in the community and the organization. This pamphlet continued to emphasize the idea that women were an integral part of furthering the message of white supremacy, but their most important and influential work was still on the home front. One example of Klanswomen implementing their work of helping younger women was Daisy Douglas Barr’s establishment in Indiana of a home for fallen women and prostitutes that later went on to become a Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA).70

The WKKK “Funeral Rites” pamphlet reinforced the symbols discussed in the above mentioned “Kloran” brochure. The female pallbearers and funeral guards were to be dressed in white robes, the funeral was held either at home or a church, and the flag, the Bible, and the fiery cross all played a role in the service as well.71 The private service was to contain portions in which specific Bible verses were read, and the flag and the fiery cross were to accompany the casket throughout the service, perhaps to reinforce the deceased Klanswoman’s loyalty to her country.72 Even in death the Klanswoman was loyal to the ritualistic symbols she dedicated herself to in life.

Revealing much about the gender ideologies of white supremacists, the WKKK Constitution and its myriad publications from the early 1920s do not offer evidence for the activities of what Blee refers to as “rank and file” Klanswomen.73 Information surrounding rank

70 Blee, Women of the Klan, 106.
71 Women of the KKK “Funeral Rites” (np, 1920s) Indiana Historical Research Foundation, 2.
72 Ibid., 3.
73 Blee, Women of the Klan, 118.
and file members is scarce and difficult to find due to the secret nature of the Klan and lack of
documentation that offer insight into these members’ actions and motivations. It is also difficult
to ascertain the number of regular members versus women in leadership positions due to the lack
of information. Blee asserts that most of WKKK members were from the middle and working
classes and the majority were married women. Blee also holds that like the female leaders of
the group, rank and file members were active in their communities through churches and a wide
variety of organizations including the League of Women Voters and the Daughters of the
American Revolution. Blee is likely to be correct about this assertion considering her in depth
research and interviews with former Klanswomen and their lives. Newspaper accounts offer
insight into rank and file member’s activities within the Klan and indicate the ongoing popularity
of the WKKK in the 1920s. The Indianapolis Times on August 5, 1927 remarked that
approximately 10,000 women were estimated to be among the 40,000 members who participated
in a Klan parade in Indiana. Ceremonies and dedication services for mothers and children were
among the activities that members participated in. Klanswomen participated in parades,
organizational ceremonies, and other Klan-related activities expanding the organizations
influence and membership numbers through their involvement.

Other types of information to recruit rank and file women and to continuously remind
each other of their commitment to protecting the home and the maintenance of female white
supremacy were published by the WKKK. Through articles in sections of Klan magazines,
white supremacist women could reach out to those with similar interests and goals. For example,

74 Ibid., 121.
75 Ibid., 122.
The Kluxer magazine, a national Klan publication from 1923 published in Dayton, Ohio, printed several articles that re-emphasized women’s roles and responsibilities within the Klan. The magazine highlighted topics such as make-up and appearance, recipes, Protestant education in the school system, prayer in schools, the maintenance of secrecy, women’s role in the community, and reports of WKKK and KKK activities within various cities.

When it came to appearance, style, and the latest home tips women of the Klan were urged to keep up to date by reading articles in The Kluxer. “Style Tips” in the October 27, 1923 edition of The Kluxer advised women about wearing street dresses made of satin and replacing fur pieces with silk scarves. The article “Perfume” of the same issue, advised women to wear fragrances sparingly and only in the proper situations. And in the snippet “Rouge” of the November 24, 1923 edition, women were directed against applying too much to their cheeks and they should never apply rouge in public, as it was not in good taste. These articles reminded women that their appearance should be in style but conservative, as they should still remain decent, Christian women. On occasion, recipes printed in the magazine for the “Kook’s Kitchen Kabinet” kept women up to date on the latest food trends and recipes for their family used by other Klanswomen. These magazines offered articles reminding women of their place in the Klan world by encouraging them to engage in domestic activities.

While parts of The Kluxer mentioned above read like a current fashion magazine doling out advice on appearance and style, others turned to more serious subjects that Klanswomen had emphasized all along, such as Christian education. A 1923 article, “American Society a Mighty School” reminded women of the Klan that the teaching of Christianity and the Bible should be kept in public schools. Klanswomen were encouraged through the magazine’s articles and editorials to stay active in the fight to maintain Protestant teachings within the school systems.
The article reminded women that the Klan was both a powerful and important force within the church and the schools. Klanswomen argued that Catholics, in particular, led the assault on keeping the Protestant religion in the system. According to one article from 1923, the school system should be a “gospel-like institution” and that the Bible should be in schools because “it furnishes the means of an education to the whole people, to all classes and conditions of society.”77 States such as Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and California were troublesome to the KKK because various courts in them ruled that the Bible was a religious book not for teaching in public schools. By suggesting these values, the WKKK fulfilled the role envisioned by the KKK when it formed the women’s groups.

Certain articles in The Kluxer reemphasized the Klan commitment to a pure white nation, free of immigrants. The article “America is Ours,” reminded Klanswomen of the Klan belief concerning the immigrant threat to America. The anonymous author wrote, “[U]ndesirable immigration is poison. The immigrant should be considered as a visitor in our house.”78 In other words, it was fine to let immigrants in as long as they could be controlled and they did not stay for an extended period of time. White American men and women should always maintain control of their homeland. In Klan rhetoric, women were encouraged to stay active in the fight against the influx of immigrants across the nation.

Other editorials in The Kluxer concerned women’s roles in the local communities. Editorials such as “Women, What Can We Do Toward Meeting Community Needs” argued for better-educated mothers who were “revolutionists in the matter of care and rearing of children.”79

---

77 Klanswoman, “American Society a Mighty School” The Kluxer. October 20, 1923. Ball State University Library Special Collections.

78 “America is Ours” The Kluxer, October 27, 1923, 23. Ball State University Library Special Collections.
The editorial additionally called upon women to be leaders, using their abilities such as keeping a thoroughly clean house and children clean and happy as important skills to emphasize in leadership. These are curious skills to be linked to leadership, but the Klan believed that by keeping clean houses and raising good children, white supremacist women set an example for other women to follow. Women had control over specific domestic issues. The editorial emphasized this by saying, “[W]e are women and hence are not expected to be interested in certain problems of community welfare to the same extent that men should be interested.”80

Once again women remained assigned to the domestic sphere, with the protection of the family as the highest priority. Here again is a contradiction, as in most Klan documents, that relates to women’s lack of involvement in the community in particular instances. While in certain articles Klanswomen were encouraged to vote, in pieces such as this, women were told to leave the community welfare in the hands of men. While Klansmen supported women’s suffrage, it is likely they only expected women to vote on particular domestic related issues (i.e. immigration), or in cases of a tight race or a particularly volatile issue.

Despite the large amount of literature published by the WKKK, the Kamelia, and similar white supremacist organizations, the contradictions and conflicts within the organization eventually proved to be too controversial to overcome. The problems began with the formation of the WKKK and the Kamelia. The leaders within the Ku Klux Klan, differing in their views of American women’s proper role within the KKK, formed two separate women’s groups, the Kamelia and the WKKK, and both attempted to take over the other women’s organizations.

---

79 “Women, What Can We Do Toward Meeting Community Needs?,” The Kluxer, October 20, 1923, 28. Ball State University Library Special Collections. This is another example of the relation of the white supremacist ideology to Republican Motherhood and its emphasis on rearing children with a particular mindset.

80 Ibid., 28.
operating under similar ideals. In 1923 and 1924, the WKKK, being the larger, more powerful organization absorbed the majority of the other female white supremacist organizations. Women became an important part within the Klan offering women the opportunity to enlarge the already increasing numbers of white Americans joining the movement, as well as to vote in favor of a particular faction of the Klan. While encouraged to use their voting power in the political arena, women’s true dedication was to be the home. Klansmen only expected women to be politically active when it had a major impact on the domestic sphere. These contradictory roles women held, as well as the exposure of domestic treatment of women, such as spousal abuse, in the Klan by powerful male members led to the group’s downfall by 1930.

Many male leaders of the KKK refused to let the WKKK act as a separate entity, believing women to be important to the Klan’s overall success, but still serving their most important role as wives and mothers. Several prominent leaders, including Grand Dragon William J. Simmons, maintained significant influence over the organization and its activities monitoring and supervising the female leaders of the group throughout the WKKK’s existence. When Simmons split from the KKK and organized some women associated with the Klan into the Kamelia, he appointed himself, not a woman, to head the organization as “El Magnus” in March of 1923. After a long legal battle between the warring factions loyal to Hiram “Hi” Evans, the recognized leader of the KKK nationwide, and William Simmons over legal copyrights to the KKK, Simmons eventually won. However, this still led to Simmons’s banishment from the Klan and the effective end of the Kamelia. The women’s organization that Evans helped to form, the WKKK, continued to flourish, despite their legal loss in the Fulton County, Georgia court. While Evans’s involvement in the WKKK was much more

81 Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 14.

82 Ibid., 16.
limited than Simmons’s involvement within his organization, Evans still had the final say when it came to important activities and involvement of the women in the group. This battle over the male leadership in white supremacist women’s organizations leaves unanswered the question of the true leadership of women in the organization. Evans’s role in the women’s organization also implies that while women were in leadership roles within the organization, men were ultimately in charge.

Under Evans’s leadership starting in 1922 the Klan restructured and attempted to change the public’s opinion about the Klan’s activities. With their lawless and violent days supposedly behind them, the Klan’s mission became to promote education, temperance, the flag, Protestantism, morality and charity. Women could be an important part in the promotion of these new ideals considering their past work with various charities and movements that promoted the new reformed image of the Klan. However, because of continued in-fighting, internal corruption and male leaders and members who failed to practice what they preached when it came to the treatment and respect of sacred white womanhood, the Klan continued its downward spiral.

A critical problem within the organization connected to the Klan’s demise was its treatment of women. Many KKK and WKKK documents presented women as objects to be protected and upheld, particularly by the male members of the Klan. Women held the key to the future through the raising of proper Protestant children and maintenance of the home front and should be respected and valued as important contributors to the mission of white supremacy. Furthering their objectification, women needed to be protected from rape by African American men and others regarded as foreigners by the Klan. Klansmen were expected to protect women’s

---

83 Ibid., 18.
purity and chastity above all else if there was hope for the future of the country. However, during the mid-1920s, several accusations against the Klan’s male members became public. Violent incidents associated with men of the KKK brought further negative attention to the group. These included the flogging of a divorced mother in rural Alabama in 1927 and the beating of a Indianapolis woman who was arrested for child neglect.\textsuperscript{84} Other accusations included the continued abuse of alcohol, rape, and physical, mental and emotional abuse.

By the mid-1920s the public began to respond to the Klan’s treatment of women. In an article in \textit{The Nation}’s April 30, 1924 issue entitled “In the Driftway,” the anonymous author responded to a Texas woman with whom the Klan was displeased because she wanted to live by herself on her own land.\textsuperscript{85} This article was an example of the Klan’s ambivalence toward women’s independence. It also reflected the changing public attitudes towards the Klan concerning their conflicting rhetoric about a number of things, one of which was women’s changing roles. While the women’s organization largely resembled the men’s organization in many ways, more and more conflicts arose as women changed from symbolic objects of protection to active participants in Klan activities and within their communities. Blee argued that one major reason that problems between the women’s and men’s organization arose was because women’s expanding role in the white supremacist movement threatened the male dominance of the organization. She wrote that the organization’s identity based upon symbols of “masculine exclusivity and supremacy became problematic” and that if “Klansmen understood that defending white womanhood meant safeguarding white protestant supremacy and male

\textsuperscript{84} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 83.

supremacy, many women heard the message differently.”

This helped aggravate the tension that was already present between the rhetoric and action that the KKK encouraged in women and women’s changing societal roles.

Eventually, several violent and scandalous events, particularly the murder of Madge Oberholtzer at the hands of a prominent Klansman in Indiana, culminated to bring the Klan to its knees at the height of its second wave of popularity. It is certainly ironic that the Klan collapsed, in part, because of its failure to uphold the organization’s vow to protect the purity of American women.

The reality and extent of women’s leadership roles in the WKKK and other white supremacist women’s organizations is difficult to decipher simply through the examination of primary documents. The magazines and official documents of the WKKK offer insight into the roles women were expected or encouraged to fulfill. However, the contradictions between rhetoric, action and male leaders’ treatment of women helped contribute to the downfall of the organization as other events compounded to send the organization spiraling out of control as the Klan’s problems continued to make news across the nation.

---

Chapter Three
To Pledge, Promise and Swear to the Protection of American Womanhood: How Women’s Treatment in the Klan Led to Its Downfall

The Women of the Ku Klux Klan does not measure a woman by her worldly wealth, but by her worth and character, and unsullied womanhood based upon honor and untouched by hypocrisy or selfish social valuations. – Women of the Ku Klux Klan

Despite the publication of brochures that reemphasized their message and goals concerning women’s expanding roles in and outside of the home, public scrutiny and increasing internal conflict concerning the treatment and placement of women within the national organization played crucial roles in the demise of the WKKK and the KKK by 1930. If publication and recruitment efforts sought to primarily increase membership, they failed as membership dropped steadily starting in 1924 due to revelations about the true violent nature of the organization and negative state and national press coverage. It soon became public knowledge that the protection of white womanhood was not the highest priority among Klansmen, and that maintenance of male supremacy within the organization came first and at the expense of women.

Initial internal problems began with the formation of the WKKK, the Kamelia and male influence and power over female participants. The leaders within the Ku Klux Klan, differing in their views of proper women’s role within the KKK, split to form the two groups and both attempted to take over the other women’s organizations operating under similar ideals. In 1923 and 1924, the WKKK, being the larger, more powerful organization absorbed the majority of the other female white supremacist organizations. Nonetheless, many male leaders of the KKK refused to let the WKKK act as a separate entity.

---

Under Hiram Evans’ leadership the Klan regrouped and attempted to change the public’s opinion about its activities. Lawlessness and violence were supposedly ended and the Klan’s mission became to promote education, temperance, the American flag, morality and charity in the name of Protestantism. Evans believed women could be an important part in the promotion of these new ideals considering their past work with various charities and movements that promoted the new reformed image of the Klan.

Major contradictions and critical problems within the organization related to the Klan’s physical and emotional treatment of women. In many KKK and WKKK documents, women were emphasized and supposedly revered as objects to be protected and upheld, particularly by the male members of the Klan. Women held the key to America’s white future. The reality behind closed doors and within the private lives of Klanswomen and other white women told tales of abuse and scandal at the hands of Klansmen.

The exposé of behind the scenes corruption within the political arena came hand in hand with the public charges of abuse of wives, female family members, and white women within the community. Incidents regarding the Klan’s treatment of women also became public knowledge. In 1927, the Klan beat a divorced woman from Alabama for marrying a divorced man. After the incident, Klansmen took donations for the victim for her wounds. She was informed that she was punished “in a spirit of kindness and correction, to set your feet aright.” Blee found that women who neglected their domestic duties were often the target of violent reactions from Klansmen. Klansmen believed that their violent actions were to preserve and uphold femininity

---

2 See Chapter 2 for additional information concerning the leadership of Hiram “Hi” Evans.

3 Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City 1915-1930*, 18.


by punishing women who disgraced themselves. For example, in Indianapolis, Blee cited an incident where a “mob of Klansmen beat a woman after she was arrested for child neglect.”

While Klan actions were mostly targeted towards men, these were occasional instances in which violence against white women did occur that garnered attention outside of the Klan community. These violent incidents contradicted the Klan vow to protect white womanhood.

The most prominent incident regarding Klansmen’s treatment of women included accusations that led to the trial of Imperial Wizard D.C. Stephenson in 1925. Stephenson, an important figure in the national Klan and leader of the KKK in Indiana, was appointed by Evans. The scandal surrounding his actions brought public attention to incidents that portrayed the Klan in a negative light to the entire American public. This, in turn, led to the releasing of incriminating documents that brought the Klan to its knees in Indiana and across the United States.

There was no place in which the corruption became more rampant than in the Indiana chapter, headed by Stephenson in the years prior to his conviction. Stephenson’s story began with his leadership in the KKK and his political activism. Members of the KKK and WKKK, especially Stephenson, worked hard to ensure that Klan supported politicians and members were elected to the government on all levels. In one instance, Will Remy, the prosecutor who helped bring the case against Stephenson, recalled a dinner he attended in which public officials in Indiana celebrated their recent electoral victories and pledged to consult Stephenson before any major political decision. Due to his anti-Klan political platform, Remy was the only one at the table who did not pledge his allegiance to Stephenson. Stephenson helped several local and state

---

7 Lutholtz, 198.
politicians get elected, including sheriffs, court officials, district attorneys, school boards, mayors, state legislators, and even the governor. These officials won their positions due to bribery, coercion, and illegal contributions by the KKK and Stephenson. These revelations later helped destroy the KKK in Indiana and other states as news of the corruption spread.

Furthermore, due to his high status within the organization, Stephenson’s actions brought national attention to the mistreatment and violence women of the Klan experienced at the hands of the men of the organization. Charges against Stephenson included the rape and murder of Madge Oberholtzer in 1925. During Stephenson’s trial, evidence emerged that Oberholtzer was forced onto an overnight trip with Stephenson in which he drugged and assaulted her, then “chewed” on her body. On the trip home to Indianapolis, Oberholtzer took poison as a desperate attempt to escape captivity in hopes she would force Stephenson to seek medical attention for her. Stephenson refused her medical help until they returned. However, by the time they returned it was too late and several weeks later Oberholtzer died. Her deathbed declaration about the events helped convict Stephenson on the charges of second-degree murder and sent him to jail for life.

*The Indianapolis Times* and *The Indianapolis News* reported full details of Oberholtzer’s death and Stephenson’s trial. The first account of Oberholtzer’s death in *The Indianapolis News* opened with the screaming headline: “Miss Oberholtzer Dies, Coroner Asks Autopsy” and is

---

9 Ibid., 173-4.
10 See picture in Appendix Two, Figure 2.1
11 Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 157.
12 Ibid., 157.
13 Ibid., 159.
strangely silent of Stephenson’s Klan connections.14 Instead the account detailed the struggle between Oberholtzer, Stephenson and two other men, as well as her four-week long suffering after the incident in which she died slowly from complications due to the poison she drank.15 Other accounts in *The Indianapolis News* recounted the difficult story from Madge Oberholtzer’s mother’s perspective. The story “Madge Oberholtzer’s Mother Takes the Stand” gave a full and detailed transcript of the questioning by Marion County, Indiana prosecutor Will H. Remy. Oberholtzer was remembered as a chaste and useful woman, while Stephenson was branded a modern day “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.”16 There was rarely any mention of his Klan background during the trial. Stephenson was still a well-known figure in Indiana politics and a prominent and public figure of the Klan, so whether or not his Klan background was mentioned it was still public knowledge. Despite the Klan’s emphasis of the chastity and protection of womanhood, Stephenson failed to uphold one of the most important principles of the Klan. The additional fallout concerning political corruption that involved Stephenson and other prominent Klansmen sealed the fate of the second Klan, not only in Indiana, but in the entire country.

Stephenson single-handedly helped bring down the Klan in Indiana with his revelations of political corruption throughout the state. After his second-degree murder conviction at the hands of an all-white jury, that included known Klansmen, Stephenson went public with his knowledge of hidden corruption.17 Angry that men who had once supported him, turned against

14 “Miss Oberholtzer Dies, Coroner Asks Autopsy” *The Indianapolis News* (Vol. LVI, No. 110. 4/11/1925). Indiana State Library, Terra Haute, IN. Little is known about the national coverage of the trial in media sources. The media coverage and attention is focused in Indiana newspapers.

15 Ibid. The two other men were Stephenson’s bodyguards, Earl Klinck and Earl Gentry. While Stephenson was found guilty of second degree murder, his two conspirators were found not guilty.

him, Stephenson sought revenge. While ensuring the election of officials he approved of, Stephenson kept written documentation and evidence of all parties involved. Following his conviction in 1925 he released information to the media, which included information concerning bribes taken by Governor Jackson and other prominent Republicans in the state.\footnote{Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 96. Numbers for specific states are difficult to know, again, due in large part to the secrecy surrounding the organizations. However, between 1928 and 1930 national membership dropped from several hundred thousand to less than 50,000.} The Klan-controlled Republican party in Indiana and the KKK rapidly fell out of favorable opinion among average Americans as of 1925. By 1928, Indiana’s Klan empire had collapsed with approximately four-thousand members, down from nearly half a million at its height.\footnote{Chalmers, \textit{Hooded Americanism}, 174. Little is known about the national coverage of the trial in sources including Chalmer’s \textit{Hooded Americanism}. The media coverage and attention is focused in Indiana newspapers.} As the most powerful Klan empire in Indiana collapsed, memberships in other states dropped rapidly as news of political corruption spread and public attitudes changed.

While Stephenson’s conviction and revelations regarding the Klan was a major blow to the Klan, it was not the main reason the Klan became unpopular. As more and more information surrounding the Klan’s activities became public, attitudes regarding race and sexuality also began to change. One of the Klan’s main vows was always to uphold and protect white women. However, with Stephenson’s conviction, as well as other incidents regarding degrading and violent treatment of women, the Klan’s true contradictory nature, as well as their violent past became public discussion.

In August 1925, the Klan attempted to regain national recognition and support by marching in Washington, DC. Forty thousand Klansmen and women descended on the nation’s capital to remind the nation of their numbers, influence and power, while attempting to regain favor in the public view.\footnote{17 Chalmers, \textit{Hooded Americanism}, 174. Little is known about the national coverage of the trial in sources including Chalmer’s \textit{Hooded Americanism}. The media coverage and attention is focused in Indiana newspapers.} Members reminded spectators of their message of Protestantism by...
singing songs such as “Onward Christian Soldiers” and other religious hymns. The Klan tried in vain to keep the spirit of their version of Christianity and patriotism alive within their organization. *The Nation* printed a reflection on the parade in its August 19, 1925 edition to remind readers that “the Ku Klux Klan is not dead yet; it can marshal 30,000 Klansmen willing to don a sheet and peaked nightcap and march through the streets of Washington on a sweltering August day.” However, the editors asserted that despite the numbers the Klan had become “safe- and uninteresting.” To the American public, the Klan no longer reflected the numbers and actions that had once made them dangerous and intimidating. By the time the KKK held their second annual parade in Washington, DC in 1926, women still visibly supported the Klan and its mission, despite the prior treatment of women by Klansmen. A higher number of women attended and marched in the festivities in Washington than in previous years, however the total number of participants came to little more than twenty thousand, approximately ten thousand less from the previous year. A new float honored women by introducing the crowd to “Miss 100 Percent America” who held an open Bible and was joined by her court, similar to the homecoming rituals of high schools and colleges. In spite of their private actions, the Klan still wanted to portray women as the saving grace of America, full of purity, piety and grace.

20 Ibid., 287.
21 “The Ku Klux Klan is Not Dead Yet” *The Nation* (Vol. CXXI, No. 3137, 8/19/1925).
22 Ibid.
23 See figure 2.2-2.4 in Appendix Two for Klan parade pictures in Indiana.
25 Ibid., 289.
Even though the Klan tried desperately to disassociate itself from Stephenson, his violent acts against women and his political corruption, it could not escape the far-reaching effects and the changing attitudes of the American public. In 1927, *The Nation* printed a lengthy article titled “Scandals of 1927- Indiana” that detailed the continuing public scandals involving public officials in the Hoosier state.\(^{27}\) The fallout from Stephenson’s documents included the Klan connection of Indianapolis’ Mayor Duvall, Senators Watson and Robinson, as well as the indictment of Governor Jackson.\(^{28}\) All of these men were tied to the Klan, either through membership (Duvall) or through the political scandal that helped get them elected. Mayor Duvall swore in open court that he had promised that at least eighty-five percent of the city positions would go to Klan members.\(^{29}\) The publicity surrounding the Klan scandal in Indiana brought about a number of other, more minor, political fallouts, but led to the public ousting of these four prominent men, which contributed to the political fallout across the nation.

As public opinion of the Klan fell concerning the severity of these incidents, so too did Klan membership in Indiana and nationwide. Although Klan members running as political contenders were popular in the 1924 election, by 1928 Klan candidates did not fare as well as they once had. Controversy continued in other states and allegations in various local governments surfaced as membership and support for the Klan waned. By 1930 the Klan had all but vanished across the United States and moved underground.

Despite their continued efforts to retain their force and flex their numbers at the nation’s capital, the Klan continued its downward spiral. Men and women dropped out of the organization in overwhelming numbers as the true violent nature of the Klan continued to reveal


\(^{27}\) Ibid.

\(^{28}\) Ibid.
itself and public attitudes began to change.\textsuperscript{30} Several male members had broken their own oaths to uphold the supremacy of the white race and the purity of women through their increasing abuse of their wives and other white women.\textsuperscript{31} The skewed vision of Protestantism and inability to follow their own beliefs led to the demise of the group. The hypocrisy that took a firm hold of the Klan became too much and by 1930, with fewer than fifty thousand members, the Klan was but a shadow of the power it once had been.

\textsuperscript{29} Blee, \textit{Women of the Klan}, 175.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 83.
Conclusion

Women of the Ku Klux Klan: A Life of Contradiction, A Legacy of Hate

With the Fiery Cross as a symbol of the purest and most loyal patriotism, we will go forward, forever a force and power for all that is good and true. “With charity towards all and malice towards none,” we will forever stand as a solid wall and a bulwark of strength for the American government and with our resources and even our lives, protect its Constitution, and our constitutional rights, upbuild our public schools and do all in our power to see that the oncoming generation may have every chance to develop into pure, honest and upright American citizens.- Women of the Ku Klux Klan

White supremacist women had a profound and important influence on the KKK. Traditional female roles as domestic and submissive housewives were continuously emphasized among the KKK and WKKK and female leaders of the Klan highlighted these roles. As wives and mothers, Klanswomen were expected to maintain model homes characterized by proper religious upbringing that served as a reflection of the moral standards of the household. Children raised by white supremacist women were supposed to be obedient, upstanding examples of the white race and thus a reflection of women’s successful efforts. The success of white supremacist women was based on how well their family life reflected the ideals of the KKK. Also, it was important for their children to continue as legacies for the movement to further the message of white supremacy. The more pious and moral a family was believed to be in the community, the better it reflected women’s successes and efforts to continue the supremacy of the white race.

Women’s involvement in the KKK helped expand the group’s influence and encompass more than just men. As more and more women joined, the membership ranks of the Klan swelled to every corner of the United States. Klan membership exceeded four million at its height in the mid-1920s, with more than a million in Indiana alone. Through women’s efforts the Klan was able to spread messages of racial supremacy through a number of social and political outlets. White supremacist women argued for improvements in their communities with

---

1 Women of the Ku Klux Klan, “Kloran or Ritual of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan” (Women of the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s).

racial supremacist undertones in every campaign they were active in. Klanswomen built upon ideas they took from the suffrage and temperance movement regarding morally clean communities and equal rights for women. They advocated the idea that if white women had the right to vote then the white race would reign supreme; therefore, potentially meeting their goals such as the eradication of alcohol in hope of moral communities could become a more successful campaign.

Through their involvement in the KKK, Klanswomen found an outlet for their political voice in a male-dominated world, if only to reflect and advocate for women’s domestic roles. The true contradiction lies in the rhetoric of Klanswomen. Advocating publicly for women’s continued roles in the home as wife and mother, they encouraged women to step outside their traditional roles and into leadership roles in the public sphere. Despite the contradictory rhetoric found throughout their pamphlets, they led other white supremacist women and became influential members in the male-dominated organizations on a number of social and political issues. Examples of female leaders were Daisy Douglass Barr and Robbie Gill Comer, who blurred the lines concerning acceptable social roles for women. However, treatment of women at the hands of male leaders proves that, although women lead each other, they were still not viewed as equals in the eyes of men. Violent beatings and public ridicule of women by Klansmen reinforced the hypocrisy of protecting white womanhood within the organization in the public eye.

Just as it had in the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Klan became an underground organization by the early 1930s. Klan activity still existed but it was not officially recognized or condoned by any national leader of the KKK. The group continued its violent activities including lynching, cross burnings, and murder primarily against African Americans, but also
against immigrants and Catholics. However, it is difficult to ascertain how many of the race-related crimes beginning in 1930 were perpetrated by the Klan due to the highly secretive nature of the organization, and lack of reporting these crimes as hate-related. When officially resurrected for the third time in the 1950s, the group’s number once again began to rise steadily, as did the violence against minorities. Although the WKKK was not recognized as a separate entity apart from the KKK, women continued their participation in the group as members. Smaller groups aligning themselves with the principles of the KKK continue to sell their message across the Internet in the 1990s and today, targeting a new population of young white supremacists, both male and female.

Continuing its activities, the KKK rallies against a growing number of minority groups today, branching out to include hatred and violence against African-Americans, Jews, Muslims, and homosexuals. Additionally, the group has split into a number of other white supremacy groups with similar goals. However, internal conflicts over leadership continue due to the prosecution of various leaders by federal and state governments. Women are rarely leaders of the group, but the KKK and its counterparts aggressively target women by specifically recruiting them into their ranks.

Remaining true to the same message of domesticity and submissiveness, male members continue to use similar recruitment tactics in the KKK today. Focusing on their roles as white Protestant mothers, women are targeted by white supremacy organizations through new marketing strategies. Clothing lines geared toward both white women and their children represent one example of the latest strategies that organizations have developed to recruit women. The clothing products include onesies with white supremacist messages for infants, and an entire line of clothing created for women that embraces the Confederate flag as a reflection of
the former “glory” of the white race in the South. The flag is made into bathing suits, handbags and shirts for women to promote pride of their white heritage.

Known as an international hate group, the KKK has perpetuated countless acts of violence against African Americans and other minorities since the 1860s. It is ironic that such an organization would offer women the opportunity to become leaders in local communities, but there is historical evidence in Klan rhetoric that suggests the KKK encouraged women to become leaders, albeit in conservative and traditional methods. However, the fact remains that women’s full role in the KKK is still indecipherable due to the lack of primary evidence and documentation of women’s activities within the Klan. Moreover, it is difficult to ascertain whether documents supposedly written and published by women were such, rather than written by male leaders within the Klan to encourage traditional female roles. Even though historians can gather information as to what women were encouraged to do, the roles white supremacist women actually played still remains unclear. Research can offer glimpses of what these women did on occasion, as Blee’s work shows, but whether or not they fulfilled their role as leaders in male dominated organization is still not known.

Another problem that exists is that while research does offer insight into the roles some women fulfilled in the WKKK, the rank and file member’s involvement is not known. Women like Daisy Douglas Barr were upper class and well-known in their communities. But the lack of evidence and secrecy surrounding rank and file membership keeps their participation a mystery to historians. Blee’s work highlights interviews with former Klanswomen, giving insight into a more middle and lower class perspective, rather than high ranking, and often upper class officers.

The role of women of the Ku Klux Klan is one of the most fascinating contradictions that exist in history today. There is more work to be done concerning the study of typical women’s
experience in the Klan. The message of white supremacy perpetuated by the Klan was both stereotypical and traditional concerning women’s roles. However, in theory and rhetoric it allowed for women to become social and political leaders, even though they advocated a message that was the exact opposite of their progressive counterparts. In joining one of the most notoriously violent and sexist organizations that has ever existed in the United States, women were encouraged to find a voice of influence and power among its ranks and change the way history views white supremacists.
Appendix One

Klanswoman
Figure 1.1

Officer
Figure 1.2

* Source: Women of the Ku Klux Klan, “Catalogue of Official Robes and Banners” (NP, 1920s), Ball State University Special Collections: Ku Klux Klan Collection, Muncie, IN. Picture Source: Ku Klux Klan Collection Ball State University Library. The Kluxer (Dayton: Ferret Publishing Company, 20 October 1923), Ball State University Special Collections: Ku Klux Klan Collection, Muncie, IN; Women of the Ku Klux Klan, Ball State University Special Collections: Ku Klux Klan Collection, Muncie, IN; “The Equality of Women Booklet” (Women of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc Imperial Headquarters, 1920s) Indiana Historical Research Foundation.
Excellent Commander
Figure 1.3

Regent
Figure 1.4

Service Woman
Figure 1.5

Kleagle
Figure 1.6
Imperial Commander
Figure 1.7

Band Director
Figure 1.8

Tri-K Klub Komrad
Figure 1.9

Tri-K Klub Officer
Figure 1.10
### PRICE LIST

Robes, Banners, Flags and Insignia of Women of the Ku Klux Klan, and Tri-K Klub

#### ROBES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Fabric</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Klanswoman Robe No. 1</td>
<td>Klan Cloth</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Officer Robe No. 2</td>
<td>Klan Cloth</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent Commander Robe No. 3</td>
<td>Klan Cloth</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Regent Robe No. 4</td>
<td>Klan Cloth</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Service Woman Robe No. 5</td>
<td>Klan Cloth</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kleagle Robe No. 6</td>
<td>Sateen</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Major Kleagle Robe No. 7</td>
<td>Sateen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Great Officer Robe No. 8</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Grand Officer Robe No. 9</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Realm Chief of Staff Robe No. 10</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Realm Commander Robe No. 12</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Imperial Representative Robe No. 13</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Band Director Robe No. 16</td>
<td>Sateen</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Band Member Robe No. 17</td>
<td>Sateen</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Item Description</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Drill Team Robe No. 18</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Extra Drill Team Cape</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Special Glee Club Uniform No. 20</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Special Drum and Bugle Corps Uniform No. 21</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Kourier Department Private No. 22</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Kourier Corporal No. 23</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kourier Sergeant No. 24</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Kourier Lieutenant No. 25</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Kourier Captain No. 26</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Kourier Major No. 27</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Kourier Colonel No. 20</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ROBES, TRE-K KLUB DEPARTMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Komad No. 29</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Officer No. 30</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Field Supervisor No. 31</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub State Supervisor No. 32</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Drum and Bugle Corps No. 34</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Drum Team No. 35</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Tri-K Glee Klub No. 36</td>
<td>Klan Cloths</td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BANNERS AND FLAGS**

(Reversed colors furnished for Leader)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Klub Banner No. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Klub Banner No. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Klub Banner No. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Klub Banner No. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Major Klugle Banner No. 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Reals Commander Banner No. 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Drill Team Banner No. 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Drill Team Banner No. 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Drill Team Banner No. 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Gold Eagle Service Banner No. 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Province Banner No. 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Championship Banner No. 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Klub Banner No. 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Drum and Bugle Corps Banner No. 17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Official Klub Flag No. 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Prices on U. S. Flag and Christian Flag in various sizes, furnished on request.
### TRI-K KLUB BANNERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Banner No. 19</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Tri-K Drill Team Banner No. 20</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Tri-K Klub Drum and Bugle Corps No. 21</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INSIGNIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 59</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regulation, Felt</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Excellent Commander</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Past Officer (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Regent (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Past Kleagle (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 60</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Great Officer (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Grand Officer (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Realm Chief of Staff (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Realm Commander (each)</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 61</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Service Bars (per dozen)</td>
<td>$1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stars (per dozen)</td>
<td>$1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eagles (each)</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Reclamation and Extension (each)</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Klanswomen Posing in Uniform
Figure 1.14
APPLICATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

IN THE
INVISIBLE EMPIRE

Women of the Ku Klux Klan
(Incorporated)

To Her Majesty the Imperial Commandant of the Invisible Empire, Women of the Ku Klux Klan:
I, the undersigned, a male born and legal resident of the United States of America, being a white female citizen, believe in the principles of which the Invisible Empire, the organization of the Ku Klux Klan, are a part, and do hereby volunteer to serve in the cause of the Invisible Empire, the Ku Klux Klan, and do hereby promise to uphold the principles and objectives thereof.

I do hereby promise to uphold the principles and objectives of the Invisible Empire, the Ku Klux Klan, and do hereby volunteer to serve in the cause of the Invisible Empire, the Ku Klux Klan.

Signed:

Address:

Date:

The person recording this application must sign the line above.

Full Name of Applicant:

State:

County:

Town:

Ward:

Residence Address:

Husband's Name and Business Address:

Place of Birth:

Date of Birth:

Married or Single:

Religion:

How many children have you?

Marital Name:

Occupation:

How long have you resided in this city or community?

Are you a member of any other woman's organization?

If so, give names of organizations:

Have you paid your poll tax for 1915?

If so, will you do so now?

This certifies that

The person recording this application must sign the line above.

Form 1A-J.P.E.

97
Application for Admission
TO
THE SECOND DEGREE
INVISIBLE EMPIRE, WOMEN OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

To Her Ladyship, the Imperial Commander of the Invisible Empire, Women of the Ku Klux Klan:

The undersigned is now, and has been for more than three (3) months, a member of the First Degree of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan, and is now in good and regular standing in Klan No. ______, Realm of ______._ I now hereby respectfully make application for advancement to the Second Degree of our Beloved Order.

I promise and agree on my honor to conform strictly to all rules and requirements of this degree; and I further promise at all times a strict and loyal obedience to your Constitutional authority and Constitution and laws of the fraternity, not in conflict with the Constitution and Constitutional Laws of the United States of America and the states thereof. If I prove false to my Oath as a Klanswoman and Kriterion Konservator I will accept as my portion such penalty as your authority may impose.

A Donation of Five Dollars accompanies this application.

Endorsed by

Klw._________________________ Excellent Commander.

Klw._________________________ Residence Address_________________________

Klw._________________________ Business Address_________________________

Klw._________________________ Date__________

Klokann.

Signed_________________________ Applicant.

Imperial Passport

Figure 1.18

WKKK Imperial Seal

Figure 1.20
The Kluxer Magazine
Figure 1.21
Portrait of Robbie Gill Comer, Imperial Commander

Figure 1.22
Appendix Two†

*The Indianapolis News* portrait of Madge Oberholtzer

*Figure 2.1*

Klan Parade in Newcastle, Indiana August 1, 1922

*Figure 2.2*

Klan Parade featuring a car of Klanswomen in Newcastle, Indiana August 1, 1922
Figure 2.3

Klan Parade in Muncie, Indiana 6/2/1923
Figure 2.4
Bibliography

Primary Documents


*Athens Banner Herald*. Atlanta. 8 January 1925.

*Athens Banner Herald*. Atlanta. 21 January 1925.

*Athens Banner Herald*. Atlanta. 13 February 1925.


*Athens Daily Banner*. Atlanta. 22 April 1922.

*Athens Daily Banner*. Atlanta. 21 November 1922.

*Athens Daily Banner*. Atlanta. 13 Decemeber 1922.


*Imperial Night Hawk*. Atlanta. 14 May 1924.


Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. “Constitution and Laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Incorporated.” Atlanta: Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., 1921. Ball State University Library Special Collections.


Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. “Ideals of the Ku Klux Klan.” Oxford: Main Office of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, nd. Ball State University Library Special Collections.


Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. “Point of View From the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.” Oxford: Main Office of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, 1980s. Indiana Historical Research Foundation.


Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. “Principles and Purposes of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.” Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, nd. Indiana Historical Research Foundation.

Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. “Register to Vote and Vote.” Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s. Ball State University Library Special Collections.


*Kourier.* Atlanta. December 1924.

Ku Klux Klan. Papers Read at Meeting. np, nd. Indiana Historical Research Foundation.


“Mrs. Sedwick is New Klan Head.” The Indianapolis Times. 24 June 1926. Indiana State Library.


Women of the Ku Klux Klan. “Second Degree Obligation First Section.” Women of the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s. Indiana Historical Research Foundation.

Women of the Ku Klux Klan. “Transfer or Demit Form.” Women of the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s. Ball State University Library Special Collections.


Secondary Documents


