

The Effectiveness of Doxxing: Evidence from the Second Ku Klux Klan

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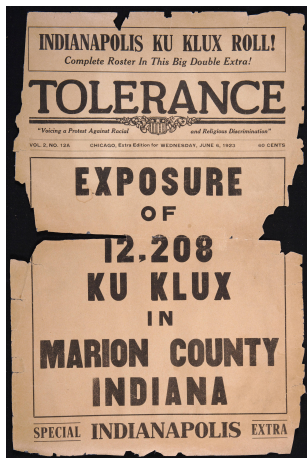
July 9, 2025

Motivation



- The second Ku Klux Klan was founded on top of Stone Mountain on 11/24/1915
- Chartered as a “benevolent, ritualistic, social, and fraternal order” with prejudices against recent immigrants, Catholics, Jews, and Black individuals
- Slow to spread until 1920, then exploded to millions of members by 1924
- Rapid downfall in 1925 due to internal conflict and scandal

Motivation




- On June 21, 1922, the American Unity League (AUL) was founded in Chicago as an anti-Klan organization
- Published *Tolerance* from 1922-1925, exposing Klan members' names, addresses, and occupations
- Relied on Klan informants who would copy chapter ("klavern") membership rolls
- Anecdotal evidence shows this practice was quite effective

Research Question

What is the effect of being outed as a Klan member (i.e., doxxed) on individuals' later-life outcomes, particularly in terms of job-switching and migration?

Why does this matter today?

 Bangor Daily News

Janet Mills lets ban on 'doxxing' children in Maine become law

No federal law explicitly bans doxxing children, but states such as Alabama and California outlaw the practice in different ways.

2 weeks ago



 MSN

New GOP Bill Targets Doxxing of ICE Agents

Tennessee Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) has praised the work of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents after joining an operation intended for the...

1 day ago



 AP News

Australia to ban doxxing after pro-Palestinian activists publish information about hundreds of Jews

The government's plan to outlaw doxxing was welcomed by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, which represents Australia's Jewish community...

Feb 13, 2024



What's been done?

- Very little work on doxxing
 - Amarasingam & Galloway (2024, JFD)
- Economic analysis of the Ku Klux Klan
 - Fryer & Levitt (2012), Ang (2023), Bazzi et al. (2024), Ang & Chinoy (2025)
- Consumer boycotts and socially responsible consumption
 - Broccardo et al. (2022, JPE), Kaufmann et al. (2024, QJE)
- Social exclusion
 - Ramos-Toro (2023, AER)

In an ideal world...

I would have complete rosters for all Klaverns nationwide, and half of the members would be randomly exposed by Tolerance. Then, I could link to the censuses and estimate

$$Y_{ict} = \beta(Exposed_i \times Post_t) + \gamma_c + \phi_t + e_{ict}$$

where β indicates the differential effect on Y of being outed/doxxed.

However, such data does not exist. Instead, I compile lists of Klansmen from surviving *Tolerance* issues and various archival sources and make a series of comparisons.

Empirical Strategy: Overview

To pin down our desired effect, I compare the outcomes of:

1. Exposed vs. unexposed Klan members in the same county
2. Exposed vs. unexposed Klan members across counties
3. Exposed vs. potential Klan members in the same county

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 - Sample: Full sample except Marion County, IN
 - Klan membership held constant
 - β could capture differing effects of membership by location
3. Exposed vs. potential Klan members in the same county
 - Sample: All counties w/ *Tolerance* issues
 - County of residence held constant
 - β tells us the effect of joining the Klan **and** being outed.

Exposed Klan Member Data

- Collected from 49/100+ weekly issues and an Indianapolis special issue
- Currently over 17,000 members across 12 states and Washington, D.C.
- Member information available differs by Klavern location

On the Roll of the Ku Klux Klan	
(These names copyrighted.)	
ROBINSON, ILL.	
WILLIAM R. COON, circuit clerk.	DUNHAM, DANIEL B., R. R. 0
IRA JONES, plumber.	Box 73.
ALBERT WILSON, mechanic.	DUNLAP, BERT, 1302 S. Pershing
ED GUTHERIE, laborer.	Ave.
DELBERT ADAMS, c. o. Prudential	DUTTENHAVEN, GLENN E., 24
Life Ins. Co.	Butler Ave.
VERTNER, HURLBERT.	DEHAVEN, DEWEY, 1200 E. St.
RAY ARMSTRONG, Oil Well	Chair St.
Shooter.	EDWARDS, JAMES F., 2313 N. New
T. B. MURPHY, farmer.	Jersey St.
H. E. CONNOURS, gunsmith.	ELDER, MARION GEORGE, R. R.
O. E. FOSTER, U. B. minister.	E. Box 74D.
JAMES WELSH, christian minister.	ELLIS, ELISHA E., 722 Elm St.
DONALD BOATRIGHT, preacher.	ELSTROD, HENRY L., 626 E. Miami
JOHN WESLEY, laborer.	St.
GEORGE HALL, oil field worker.	ENGLISH, CLOVIS H., R. R. A. 1
LEONARD SCHERNAKAU, brick	Box 442.
mason.	EVERLING, ALPHONSO, 656 S.
O. J. LAWRENCE, variety store.	New Jersey St.
GLEN STORKMAN, battery shop.	EBERHARDT, ROBERT VER-
FRANK LAWHEAD, oil field	NON, 402 E. Louisiana St.
worker.	EGNEW, JAMES H., 3544 E. Mich-
HARRY CRAIL, oil field worker.	igan St.
ROBERT BROWN, clerk.	ELLIS, FAY O., 1120 W. 34th St.
	EVERETT, STEWART EDWARD,
	3509 Roosevelt St.
	EVERMON, ELVIN C., 1214 Evison
	St.
	EARLES, S. WELLING, 1906 Ho-
	ward St.
	FULLER, JOSEPH E., 866 Udell St.
	FRANKS, CLYDE S., 320½ Virginia
	Ave.
	FRAZEO, HUGH, 2204½ E. 10th St.
	FRAZER, FLOYD F., 2300 Avondale
	Ave.
DANVILLE, ILL.	
GILLUM, P. TOM, Illinois Power and	
Light Co. res. 205 Cunningham Ave.	
RICKETTS, WM. H., restaurant, 22	
N. Washington Ave., res. 4 East	
First Street, South Danville.	

Unexposed Klan Member Data

- Collected from archives and existing sources
- Over 31,000 members from
 - Denver, CO
 - Hamilton County, IN
 - Knox County, TN
 - Marion County, IN
- Variety of forms
 - dues records (Forms K-102, A14)
 - membership application (Form 1000)
 - membership petition (Form K-108)

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES RECORD [Form K-108]

Name Wilson J Lee

Res. Address 313 Burwell Ave.,

Bus. Address So. Ry.

Occupation Engineer

Mail to _____ Address. Phone _____

3139-27

17240

Klan No. _____

State _____

Realm of _____, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

Located at _____

Transferred from	19 <u>26</u>	19 <u>27</u>	
Klan No.	January \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	January \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1st
Realm	February \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	February \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Qr.
Naturalized	March \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	March \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Robe Delivered	April \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	April \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	May \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	May \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2nd
Yrs.	June \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	June \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Qr.
Color Hair	July \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	July \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Eyes	August \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	August \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3rd
Height	September \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	September \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Qr.
ft. in.	October \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	October \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Weight	November \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	November \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4th
lbs.	December \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	December \$ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Qr.
Single			
Married			
Widower			

Suspended	Exiled	Banished	Transferred	Died

NOTE: WRITE ALL REMARKS ON OTHER SIDE

Census Linking

- Primarily linking Klan records to the 1920 census manually to preserve sample size
- Also employ a tiered automated linking method for very large samples (Denver, *Tolerance* issues)
- Once matched to 1920, I link from 1900-1940 using the Census Tree links (Buckles et al., 2023; Price et al., 2021)

rank	first	mdl	last	addy	indiana
<char>	<char>	<char>	<char>	<char>	<char>
--	----	-	-----	----	--
30	CECIL		CARTER	BEECHWOOD AVE	0
29	CECIL		CARTER		0
28	CECIL	W	CARTER	W. CHESTNUT STREET	0
27	CECIL		CARTER	SEAL HARBOR	0
26	CECIL		CARTER	BERNARD STREET	0
25	CECIL	A	CARTER	POCK CRACK ROAD	0
24	CECIL		CARTER		0
23	CECIL	W	CARTER		0
22	CECIL	S	CARTER	KING STREET	0
21	CECIL	C	CARTER	PALM STREET	0
20	CECIL	J	CARTER	2ND STREET	0
19	CECIL		CARTER		0
18	CECIL	I	CARTER	BRICKYARD CROSS ROAD	0
17	CECIL		CARTER	NORTH KANSAS AVENUE	0
16	CECIL		CARTER		0
15	CECIL		CARTER	RIVERVIEW	0
14	CECIL		CARTER	E 8TH ST	0
13	CECIL		CARTER		0
12	CECIL		CARTER	MAKE	0
11	CECIL		CARTER	PEARL ST	0
10	CECIL		CARTER	N KANSAS	0
9	CECIL	H	CARTER		0
8	CECIL		CARTER	EIGHT AVENUE	0
7	CECIL		CARTER	NO ROAD	0
6	CECIL		CARTER	SEVENTH STREET	0
5	CECIL	S	CARTER		0
4	CECIL		CARTER	WILLIS STREET	0
3	CECIL	C	CARTER	SOUTH 27 ST	1
2	CECIL		CARTER	NORTH EWING STREET	1
1	CECIL	E	CARTER	E JEFFERSON	0
--	----	-	-----	----	--
P	CECIL	E	CARTER	1361 Ewing St	-
--	----	-	-----	----	--

Type in ['0' = no link] | ['1-30' = link] | ['e' = exit session]: |

Sample Construction

Source	Exposed	Primary	1920	1910-1930	1900-1940
Denver, CO		29,635	9,389	6,631	3,876
Hamilton County, IN		453	263	224	165
Knox County, TN		445	135	99	56
Marion County, IN		929	442	350	208
Marion County, IN	✓	10,268	4,546	3,387	2,194
<i>Tolerance</i> on Microfilm	✓	6,941	1,575	1,158	781
Total		48,671	16,350	11,849	7,280

Results: Exposed vs. Unexposed in Indianapolis

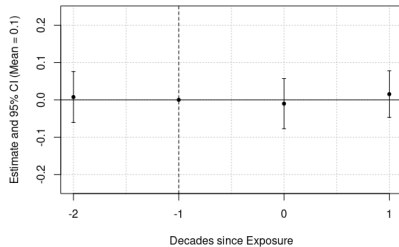
According to a 2x2 diff-in-diff specification (1920 vs. 1930, exposed vs. unexposed), doxxing was not effective in Marion County, IN.

No effect on

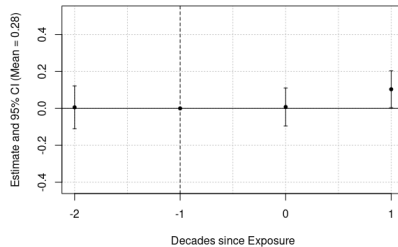
- interstate migration
- intrastate migration
- occupation changes
- industry changes
- occupational prestige

Why? Possibly rooted in the lack of diversity in Marion County at the time.

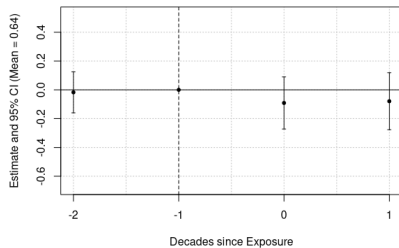
The Effect of Exposure on Interstate Migration



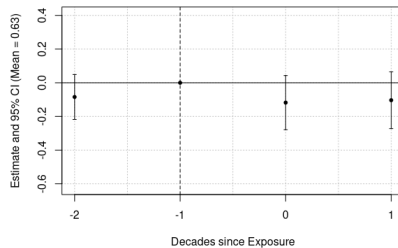
The Effect of Exposure on Intrastate Migration



The Effect of Exposure on Occupation Switching



The Effect of Exposure on Industry Switching



Results Preview: Exposed vs. Unexposed Across Counties

	Interstate	Intrastate	Occupation	Industry	Occscore
Exposed	0.091*** (0.010)	0.032** (0.011)	-0.001 (0.008)	-0.024 (0.016)	0.579 (0.384)
Num.Obs.	22956	22956	13886	13886	13259
R2	0.043	0.046	0.026	0.022	0.030
County FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Standard errors clustered at the source location are shown in parentheses.

Next Steps

- Dig further into heterogeneity by location/demographics.
- Identify a group of potential Klansmen and run specification 3.
- Where did exposed Klansmen move to? Were these areas more racially homogenous? More Republican/Democratic?
- How did outcomes for targeted minorities change in places where Klansmen were exposed vs remained unexposed?

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