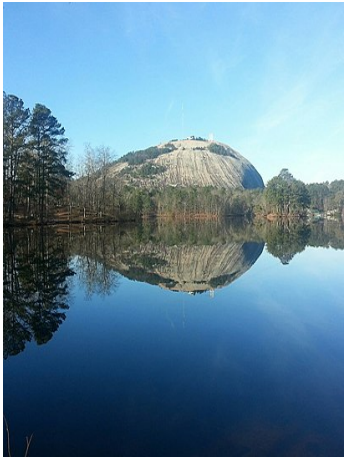
The Effectiveness of Doxxing: Evidence from the Second Ku Klux Klan

Noah MacDonald

Emory University

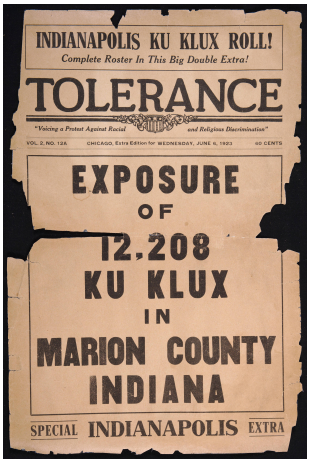
July 9, 2025

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


INDIANAPOLIS KU KLUX ROLL!

Complete Roster In This Big Double Extra!

TOLERANCE

"Voicing a Protest Against Racial and Religious Discrimination"

VOL. 2, NO. 12A CHICAGO, Extra Edition for WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1923 60 CENTS

EXPOSURE OF 12,208 KU KLUX IN MARION COUNTY INDIANA

SPECIAL INDIANAPOLIS EXTRA

- 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

Empirical Strategy: Overview

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

1. Exposed vs. unexposed Klan members in the same county
   - Klan membership and county of residence held constant
   - currently only Marion County, IN w/ both *Tolerance* issues and membership rolls
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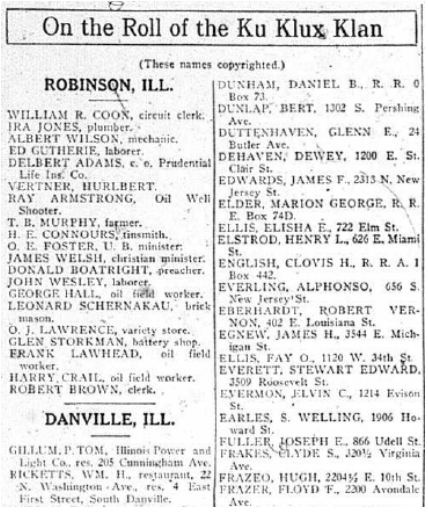
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   - Sample: Full sample except Marion County, IN
   - Klan membership held constant
   - β could capture differing effects of membership by location
3. Exposed vs. potential Klan members in the same county
   - Sample: All counties w/ *Tolerance* 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.

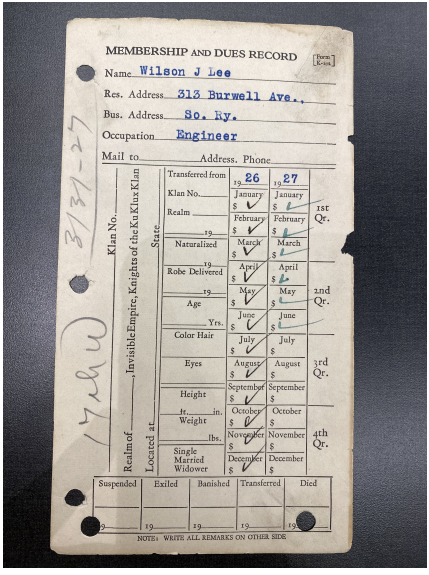
WILLIAM R. COOK, circuit clerk.
IRA JONES, plumber.
ALBERT WILSON, mechanic.
ED GUTHERIE, laborer.
DELBERT ADAMS, c/o. Prudential Life Ins. Co.
VERTNER, HURLBERT.
RAY ARMSTRONG, Oil Well Shooter.
T. B. MURPHY, farmer.
H. E. CONNOURS, tinsmith.
O. E. FOSTER, U. B. minister.
JAMES WELSH, christian minister.
DONALD BOATRIGHT, preacher.
JOHN WESLEY, laborer.
GEORGE HALL, oil field worker.
LEONARD SCHERNAKAU, brick mason.
O. J. LAWRENCE, variety store.
GLEN STORKMAN, battery shop.
FRANK LAWHEAD, oil field worker.
HARRY CRAIL, oil field worker.
ROBERT BROWN, clerk.

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.
DUNHAM, DANIEL B., R. R. 0 Box 73.
DUNLAP, BERT, 1302 S. Pershing Ave.
DUTTENHAVEN, GLENN E., 24 Butler Ave.
DEHAVEN, DEWEY, 1200 E. St. Clair St.
EDWARDS, JAMES F., 2313 N. New Jersey St.
ELDER, MARION GEORGE, R. R. E. Box 74D.
ELLIS, ELISHA E., 722 Elm St.
ELSTROD, HENRY L., 626 E. Miami St.
ENGLISH, CLOVIS H., R. R. A. I Box 442.
EVERLING, ALPHONSO, 656 S. New Jersey St.
EBERHARDT, ROBERT VERNON, 402 E. Louisiana St.
EGNEW, JAMES H., 3544 E. Michigan St.
ELLIS, FAY O., 1120 W. 34th St.
EVERETT, STEWART EDWARD, 3509 Roosevelt St.
EVERMON, ELVIN C., 1214 Evison St.
EARLES, S. WELLING, 1906 Howard St.
FULLER, JOSEPH E., 866 Udell St.
FRAKES, CLYDE S., 320½ Virginia Ave.
FRAZEO, HUGH, 2204½ E. 10th St.
FRAZER, FLOYD F., 2300 Avondale Ave.

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)



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]:
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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
Tolerance on Microfilm	✓	6,941	1,575	1,158	781
Total		48,671	16,350	11,849	7,280

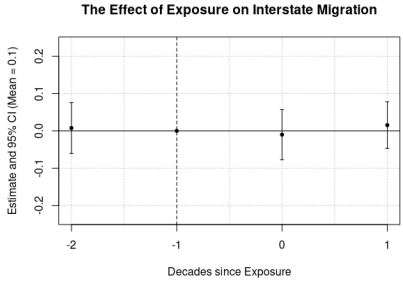
Results: Exposed vs. Unexposed in Indianapolis

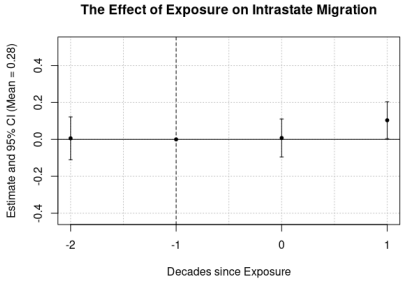
According to a 2x2 diff-in-diff specification (1920 vs. 1930, exposed vs. unexposed), doxxing was not effective in Marion County, IN.

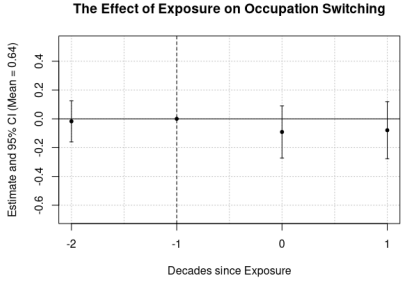
No effect on

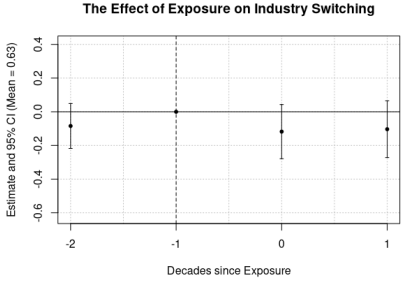
- interstate migration
- intrastate migration
- occupation changes
- industry changes
- occupational prestige

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


The Effect of Exposure on Interstate Migration
Estimate and 95% CI (Mean = 0.1)
0.2
0.1
0.0
-0.1
-0.2
-2
-1
0
1
Decades since Exposure


The Effect of Exposure on Intrastate Migration
Estimate and 95% CI (Mean = 0.28)
0.4
0.2
0.0
-0.2
-0.4
-2
-1
0
1
Decades since Exposure


The Effect of Exposure on Occupation Switching
Estimate and 95% CI (Mean = 0.64)
0.4
0.2
0.0
-0.2
-0.4
-0.6
-2
-1
0
1
Decades since Exposure


The Effect of Exposure on Industry Switching
Estimate and 95% CI (Mean = 0.63)
0.4
0.2
0.0
-0.2
-0.4
-0.6
-2
-1
0
1
Decades since Exposure

Results Preview: Exposed vs. Unexposed Across Counties

	Interstate	Intrastate	Occupation	Industry	Occscore
Exposed	0.091***	0.032**	-0.001	-0.024	0.579
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.016)	(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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