

Abstract

The thesis examines the role of women in the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1920s. The author seeks to analyze the following aspects: the main goal is to prove that the foundation and the very existence of the women's auxiliary (WKKK) points to inner tensions within the movement. The WKKK, therefore, can be used as a model or a case study in order to highlight all the issues the Klan had to face, from financial struggles and various allegations to transient and unstable membership. Secondly, the author sets out to verify whether and to what degree WKKK members legitimized the Klan, be it from the outside (public opinion) or from the inside. The author also places emphasis on the fact that the Klan should not be primarily viewed as a violent racist organization, but as a group of members who felt threatened by the outside world from which they needed to shelter themselves. Social life of the Klan and what role Klanswomen had, charity work, or interventions in local affairs play a vital role in this thesis as a result. Last but not least, proper understanding of primary sources is essential. They are obviously highly subjective and serve as a prime example of how reality differed from what was stated. (W)KKK pamphlets and writings were colored by fear of the so-called "other". Most texts written by critics and also journalists, conversely, indicate lack of knowledge and understanding for Klansmen as well as Klanswomen.