

The Ku Klux Klan

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Entertainment

Midnight Facts for Insomniacs

Podcast Transcript

(Note: transcript consists of episode outline)

Ok. So.

The Ku Klux Klan. I don't know how to ease into this one. This is gonna be rough. This is the opposite of last time, last episode was a lot of fun, and btw I have officially forgiven llamatrauma for her betrayal, which you can learn about in the Darwin awards preamble, I was very upset but have finally let it go because I super enjoyed that episode, and if you didn't get a chance to listen to that one, I don't know maybe don't if you're a sensitive person, but if you enjoy the silly episodes, that was probably my favorite of the last 12 months. I definitely had the most fun recording it, anyway, and it was very easy to edit because I just left most of the ridiculousness in. So I guess you're welcome, or I apologize, depending on how you felt about it.

But this one... Very different. Our subject today is an entirely different group of idiots, all of whom are just as stupid as anyone from the Darwin awards, but unfortunately not as easily eliminated. The klan as an organization

has been killed and resurrected before, it is the Jesus of stupidity and racism.

And it all started December 24, 1865. Christmas Eve. Instead of gathering together to sing carols and hide presents, a group of former confederate soldiers gathered together to establish the first organized terrorist group in American history. They were really feeling the Christmas spirit. To give full credit where it's due, the KKK would quickly become the worst organization in the world, and would reign as undisputed awfulness champion for almost 100 years, until Germany pulled the vilest hold my beer of all time.

Now before we get into specifics here, let's talk about the circumstances that led to the founding of the first KKK. As I alluded to, there have been multiple klans sort of customized and reconfigured for different eras.

Different costumes and customs, etc. For instance, Everyone in the 1980s clan sported flock of seagulls haircuts, you just couldn't tell under the hood. In fact there have been three distinct incarnations—or maybe you could say "resurgences"—of the Ku Klux Klan. The OG klan started as a result of the Civil War, which ended in 1865. I'm not sure if you remember how that turned out, but there was a happy ending in the non-massage sense, the bad guys lost. I'm not going to get all jingoistic about The north, but I'm confident in saying that the result was a net positive for the world as a whole,

because it brought to an end the most despicable practice the world has ever witnessed: the buying and selling and owning of humans. the Civil War was 100% about slavery... anyone who says differently is selling something...mostly racism and bullshit. Slavery was the economic engine of the south and the reason the south seceded from the union was to protect its shameful cash cow. Free labor forever, it turns out, is a helluva drug. Some confederate apologists will tell you that the civil war was the result of an argument over "states rights," which is absolutely true, southerners were fighting for the right of states to engage in slavery. And while I'm not shedding any tears over this fact, it is true that when the south lost, one of the foundational institutions of its economy was suddenly wiped out. To say that there was resentment among wealthy landowners in Southern states would be both accurate and spectacularly insufficient. The way many southerners felt, it was as if the north had suddenly granted freedom to all of their horses and declared them to be equal citizens with voting rights. Southern slave owners literally did not view Black people as human. I'm not trying to justify this viewpoint at all, but I think it's important to understand the sentiments at the time, and just how much anger was boiling away under the surface in the south... and the surface wasn't even particularly calm.

So toward the end of the 1800s many vindictive, butthurt southerners were

still having trouble accepting their defeat and they particularly resented the process of Reconstruction, which was an attempt to fold the south back into the union while integrating newly freed slaves into the economy, culture, and political systems of America ...for some reason the integration of black people was not welcomed with open arms by the those whose fortunes had been built on segregating black people. White legislatures in the south struck back against reconstruction by passing laws targeting Black voters... laws that carefully skirted the boundaries of the new constitutional amendments that guaranteed African-Americans their freedom. Poll taxes and literacy tests just a couple of the tools that racist whites would use to limit voting access to newly freed Black people who on average were less wealthy and educated for obvious reasons; in addition, so-called "black codes" imposed onerous taxes and restrictions on African-Americans. Here's an example: Charleston South Carolina passed a one dollar tax for every free person of color who was caught wearing a pocket watch. Pettiness level 20. Another example, and one that hits close to home: Every single state in the union passed anti-miscegenation laws, outlawing marriage between white people and Black people. So keep in mind that racism wasn't an exclusively southern phenomenon. Many northern states passed laws forbidding Black people to sign contracts, settle in certain areas, and often required them to carry

certificates of "good behavior" that presumably could be revoked if the behavior were deemed "not good." like if a black person were engaged in the "not good" behavior of existing in your neighborhood. Black people trying to exercise any of their new rights... that was not "good behavior" according to many disgruntled whites and would be frequently greeted with intimidation and violence.

So against this seething backdrop of vitriol and angst, The first chapter of the Ku Klux Klan Was formed in Pulaski Tennessee in 1865. And now we're back to that fateful and hateful Christmas Eve... creating a terrorist organization, widely considered the least festive method for celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior. Some of us like to spend our Christmas Eve indulging in eggnog with a little bit of rum in it, some of us prefer to create a legacy of hate and terror that will poison the very fabric of our country. Different strokes.

The founders of the kkk were an unlikely bunch, and this story did not start off the way I expected. six civil War veterans and fraternity members: John Lester, Richard Reed, Calvin Jones, James Crow, Frank McCord and John Kennedy met that Christmas eve in the law office of Calvin Jones's dad. Those names kind of threw me, by the way, A couple of them are disconcerting. Yes, there was an actual Jim Crow involved in creating the clan, no relation to Jim Crow laws, which were named after the stereotype of an

African-American known as Jim Crow. Also there was a John Kennedy, which is just weird and unfortunate. The sentence "John Kennedy was one of the founders of the Ku Klux Klan" should not be true in any rational universe, but here we are.

So what I find interesting is that These unlikely conspirators with unlikely monikers were not originally attempting to create a national terrorist organization, but rather were just kind of fucking around; the original concept was to form a fraternity of bullying pranksters. So...a fraternity. The clan's name, ku klux, is based on the Greek word kuklos, or circle, which the men most likely plucked from the well-known North Carolina fraternity known as Kuklos Adelpheon. They modified the word kuklos to ku Klux because they "thought it sounded better." because adding exes to things is so fucking edgy, as elongated muskrat will tell you. So the term ku klux clan literally means circle club. Which sounds a little less menacing. The circle club is more like a fraternal order of Teletubbies. "Come join the Circle club!"

Now of course every stupid boys club has to have stupid rules and ceremonies and handshakes and titles...and fair warning, this is going to be get kind of amazing. I guess....Fair warning for *awesomeness*. Because, Trust me, you don't know what you're in for. I'm excited on your behalf, because I would like to learn all of this again for the first time. You might know *this* part, the first president of the

organization would be Frankie McCord a.k.a. the grand cyclops. John Kennedy was vice president and as such declared himself the grand Magi. James Crowe was declared master of ceremonies and thus would be known as the grand Turk. I know You've heard some of these, but I'm telling you these titles are going to get so much better. We'll get to the good ones later. Anyway the other two men were dubbed nighthawks. It's insane that this became one of the most feared and destructive terrorist organizations in history, because clearly these were all dungeons and dragons playing neckbeards. "Nighthawk" is kind of the only one that sounds remotely cool although still pretty lame. This was some treehouse club, no girls allowed, Larping bullshit. I really hate these guys because they didn't have the decency to just be nerds. As I alluded to, the original concept was a group of frat boy bullies, and bullying is awful, but I can't help think that if they themselves had been sufficiently bullied none of this would've happened. I'm in favor of bullying bullies.

Interestingly, racism wasn't part of the group's stated purpose in the beginning. It was part of the group by default just because everyone in the group was racist, but the KKK wasn't created explicitly as an outlet for racism, it was just an outlet for men who were racists. In the beginning as you can tell by the titles, it was kind of a joke. The guys would dress up

essentially like ghosts and ride through town causing havoc. And by the way, white robes and pointy hats were not the official uniform of this version of the clan, each chapter would have a different outfit, sometimes they would even ride around wearing women's clothing... this klan was more an outlet for immature douchebaggery than racism. I was sort of shocked to learn how not intimidating or scary the original clan was.

For instance, here's a description of the initiation ritual at the time of the Klan's founding: The initiate would be blindfolded and asked a series extremely embarrassing questions after which the grand cyclops would announce "place him before the royal alter and adorn his head with the regal crown." The gathered members would then chant an oath which stated "Oh would some power the gift give us to see ourselves as others see us." A crown would then be placed upon the initiate's head and then his blindfold would be removed, and the initiate would find himself facing a mirror which revealed the crown to be a pair of donkey ears. It's hard to take seriously an organization with an initiation ritual designed to mock the entire concept of taking yourself seriously. The KKK was initially just a bunch of jackasses with actual jackass ears playing pranks around town because boredom, and they happened to be racist guys, so those pranks eventually started reflecting their racism and being targeted more and more frequently toward Black people.

Makes sense to me because if you're the kind of person who gets off on playing mean spirited pranks, The magnitude of your satisfaction is going to scale with the magnitude of the prank. Right? just like any other addiction you're going to get a bigger kick from meaner, more extreme pranks. But there's a limit to what you can get away with when you're pranking other white people in the south. it's obviously easier to target people with less power, punching down is always more fun because it's less risky and you can get away with more, these are standard bully tactics.

The transition from pranks to terrorism also tracks; I personally think most people who love playing pranks are low-key terrorists. When clan members realized that they had the ability to scare and intimidate Black people, the pranks gained a sense of purpose: Tormenting the people they resented... these pranks became method for exacting revenge. And the so-called pranks were especially effective because they targeted a population that had been terrorized by that point for hundreds of years, was largely uneducated and harbored many superstitions. Men dressed like ghosts riding through town and terrorizing the inhabitants was effective...and now I'm basically thinking of the Ku Klux Klan as villains in Scooby-Doo. "And They would've got away with it too if it wasn't for the meddling kids of the federal government." As we'll see.

Comparing the clan to ridiculous children's cartoons isn't as silly as it sounds, remember when I said it was going to get amazing? So. Here is the official list of titles from an 1867 document known as the prescript of the clan.

"Art. II. The officers... shall consist of a Grand Wizard of the Empire and his ten Genii;
a Grand Dragon of the Realm and his eight Hydras; a Grand Titan of the Dominion and his six Furies; a Grand Giant of the Province and his four Goblins; a Grand Cyclops of the Den and his two Night Hawks; a Grand Magi, a Grand Monk, a Grand Exchequer, a Grand Turk, a Grand Scribe,
a Grand Sentinel, and a Grand Ensign.
...The body politic...shall be designated and known as "Ghouls."

[Kind of a downgrade at the end there. I dub thee grand sentinels, six furies, giant of the province...and the rest of you are a bunch of ghouls. Get out of my sight, you disgust me]

[Here's my favorite part. It's so hard to pick a favorite, but I think you'll see why.]

Judiciary.

Art. VI. Sec. 1. The Tribunal of Justice... shall consist of a Grand Council of Yahoos, and a Grand Council of Centaurs.

This is just a chefs kiss level of fanciful

embarrassment. the primary identity of the KKK was cringe.

Of course now that they had wistful and grandiose titles the originators of the KKK obviously had to create their own secret language, and in the tradition of dumb eight-year-olds everywhere, they basically just invented a bunch of code words beginning with the letter K, because they're fucking morons and don't have a creative bone in their racist bodies.

Creative with K. It's all very scientology, you'll see what I mean. **A gathering of KKK members was referred to as a Klonvokation; The home bases, or clubs where they would meet were referred to as Klaverns, with a K.** seriously this is like spongebob bullshit. This is the Krusty Krab of hate groups. Treasurers were referred to as "Klabees"; initiation fees were Kecktokens, the secretary of the chapter was a Kligrapp, delegates were Kloreroe, and then a couple of my favorites: a chaplain of the KKK was called the Imperial Kludd. K-L-U-D-D. And a recruiter for the KKK was an "Imperial Kleagle."

Kind of a rough job, recruiter for the KKK. Hey, want to join my terrorist hate group? You seem like an awful human being. How insulting is it to be recruited by the second-worst organization in history.

The ritual text of the KKK btw...you have to guess what it's called. I just can't with this one. It was known as the

Kloran, which...can you sue for religious copyright? Islam would like a word. Pretty weird that a white-supremacist organization would steal from a Middle Eastern religion, they have no shame, which tracks I guess. Although they DO have shame...if they didn't, they wouldn't all be wearing pillow cases to hide their ugly inbred faces.. Also interesting that they chose for their ceremonial headwear, the dunce cap. Apt.

In fact, we know that there is shame involved in being in the Klan, evidenced by the coded language that members would often use in public to try to identify other Klansmen without tipping off the uninitiated. That's the first clue that you're not necessarily proud of your organization, KKK members would identify each other by dropping acronyms into conversation. For instance.

- **A.Y.A.K. or Ayak** - "Are you a Klansman?" to be answered with below.
- **A.K.I.A. or Akia** - "A Klansman I am"; This greeting could be inserted into common conversation, for instance "Does a Mr. Ayak live in this neighborhood" to be responded by "No, but a Mr. Akia does." The password would then be accompanied by a [secret handshake](#) or other sign of recognition.

Can you imagine witnessing this? How slick do they think they are. This would be the most bizarre farce... you're at a party and everyone keeps asking if Mr. Ayak lives in the neighborhood— wink

wink—and then like five of them bring up someone named Mr. Akia, are there really a bunch of Ayaks and akias in clan neighborhoods, and then these guys keep busting out with the same version of some kind of exploding fist bump. And you're just like ok... i'll see myself out.

Another acronym: K.I.G.Y or Kigy -
"Klansman, I greet you. Try slipping that one into conversation period

The first official elected leader of the klan, known as the grand wizard, of course. was Nathan Bedford Forest, who had been a general in the recently defeated confederate army. The KKK: appropriately formed by and composed of losers. Forest is perhaps most famous for the massacre of Fort pillow, in which he slaughtered opposing soldiers who were attempting to surrender, many of them African-Americans. Achilles V Clark, one of Forest's sergeants would later write in a letter to his sisters: "Blood, human blood stood about in pools and brains could have been gathered up in any quantity. I with several others tried to stop the butchery and at one time had partially succeeded but Gen. Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs and the carnage continued. Finally our men became sick of blood and the firing ceased." I get sick of blood pretty quick. Like at the first side of it, i'm already sick of it. I love that these guys were like firing into unarmed

surrendering soldiers and were like, "not enough blood."

The clan would end up spreading a lot like a motorcycle club, we talked about this in our Hells Angels episode, in this case initiates who moved away would establish so-called dens in their new towns...I just imagine some hideous plant releasing seeds to the wind which took root in new locations and sprouted new hideous plants. That's probably not the best analogy. The clan spread like an STD. clan members would relocate to unsuspecting new communities and start mingling, spreading the chlamydia of hate.

Now as previously discussed, under grand Wizard Forest the primary goal of the Klan was to oppose reconstruction using violence and intimidation, but eventually the Klan's ambitions escalated and members began to view the organization as a sort of shadow government operating throughout the south that could eventually spark a revolution. Because that worked great before. Rising up against the federal government, what could go wrong. This was a group of supremely delusional white supremacists who had recently failed to overthrow the union and just weren't done failing. however, the clan's tactics continued to ramp up in violence and despicibility, and by the mid 1870's the clan was doing a bang up job of spreading terror and often outright killing people. This original klan used lynch mobs and guerrilla warfare

tactics to target not just African-Americans, but also white supporters of civil rights. One estimate of clan action in South Carolina puts the number of murders the KKK committed in the single year between 1866 and 1867 as 197. Almost 200 murders in one year in one state.

So the 13th amendment had freed the slaves, and the 14th amendment banned racial discrimination in voting, but neither of those amendments actually included methods to enforce these new rules. Authorities in the south were obviously not going to take the initiative to enforce them, and were largely allowing the KKK to function unchecked. So eventually the administration of Ulysses S Grant and the United States Congress realized that that they were going to have to take the literal law into their own metaphorical hands. And it's pretty obvious why they did... At this point it was no secret that the KKK was basically trying to form another confederate army. So starting in 1870 Congress passed three separate enforcement acts, the first two of which enshrined the right of African-Americans to vote, hold office, serve on juries, and receive equal protections. The final law, the enforcement act of 1871, known as the force act or the Ku Klux Klan act and passed directly by request of President Ulysses Simpson Grant, as you might guess by the name was specifically targeted at the KKK. It authorized the federal prosecution of suspected clan

members, and also allowed the federal government to imprison them without a trial (the suspension of the rite of habeas corpus). A little sketchy, I'll be honest, but well-meaning...and I get it. desperate times etc. These laws also importantly relocated the trials of clan members to federal courts, away from the backwater hometowns of defendants who otherwise would have enjoyed a jury of their peers mostly composed of sympathetic cousin-daddies and sister mommies and grandpappies. Many of the federal courts, on the other hand, featured majority black juries. Soooo yeah. That wasn't gonna go well for you. Within a few years, the first incarnation of the clan had been effectively decimated. The enforcement acts were remarkably effective. But much as the south will not, the clan would rise again.

The second coming of the clan might be the first terrorist movement largely inspired by cinema. Have you seen "the birth of a nation"? it was a groundbreaking cinematic masterpiece directed by DW Griffith, and pioneered a number of film techniques that were familiar with today like fade outs and close-ups, giant battle sequences and the first utilization of extras—apparently before the birth of a nation everyone in a movie was a capital-A "ACT-OR" and DW Griffith was the first Director who decided to pay a bunch of untalented randos to stand around and fill space. And thus LA was born. The birth of a nation was in fact the

first motion picture screened in the White House; a special viewing had been arranged at the behest of then-President Woodrow Wilson along with his cabinet and members of his family. Wilson: a huge fan of cinema. Also a segregationist, a slavery apologist, and once described as "a man who like to tell racist 'darky' jokes about Black Americans." After viewing the film, he was reported to have remarked, "It's like writing history with lightning. My only regret is that it is all so terribly true." I saw it, and it was not terribly true, but it was truly terrible, I had to watch it in film class. The birth of a nation has been called "the most reprehensibly racist film in Hollywood history," and essentially was created as a rallying and recruitment tool for the Ku Klux Klan. It was based on a novel by Thomas Dixon Junior called "the Klansman: a historical romance of the Ku Klux Klan." Some of these words are not like the others. A romance of the Ku Klux Klan. Nothing gets me in the mood for love like domestic terrorism. Interestingly, the burning cross that we all associate with the clan first appears in this novel, and was never used by the original clan, that was a invention by the author Dixon drawing upon his own Scottish ancestry and the tradition of crann-tara, or fiery cross, a symbol that was used to rally Scottish clan members to arms. The white robes also made their debut in the book and film; as we covered, they had not been part of the original clan uniform. The film presents a fanciful reimagining of the clan's founding, in this case by a

fictional southern gentleman named Ben Cameron, who fights against the evil "psychopathic mulatto" Silas Lynch and his equally nefarious compatriot, northerner and race traitor Phil Stoneman. It's gross. I particularly remember the scenes of newly freed black men who had been elected to the South Carolina legislature, all played by white actors in blackface of course....in my recollection they are depicted as barefoot, drinking liquor and eating fried chicken in the government building, just making a mockery of the very distinguished American political system. It's terrible that these fictional Black people consumed chicken in the very building where some 60 years earlier a southern senator beat a northern senator to within an inch of his life with a cane. So Distinguished! Look up the caning of Charles Sumner. It wasn't actually the same building but you get the idea. Also of course the film depicts a famous scene of a lecherous black man pursuing a white woman to her death off of cliff...this film, full of nuance and symbolism. Very subtle. Distinguished!

Apart from the president of United States, another huge fan of the film was William Joseph Simmons, a former soldier who at the time belonged to 12 different fraternal organizations and so was very familiar with the structure of a men's club. Belonging to multiple fraternal orders was not necessarily strange in the 1910s, there wasn't a lot to do back then. There was no social media, you had to gather with your

friends in person. And remember their birthdays. Anyway, Simmons was hit by a car in 1915 and while he was recovering he thought it might be fun to revive the ku klux klan. We all need hobbies. I don't know what you do when you're confined to your bed due to injury or illness, but I make plans to resurrect hate groups. For his sake I hope there was a traumatic brain injury involved in the crash, that would maybe let him off the hook a little bit. Simmons and a few other reprehensible morons, including two old men who had been members of the original clan and apparently wanted to secure their places in hell, climbed Stone Mountain outside of Atlanta Georgia on thanksgiving and burned a cross to inaugurate a wonderful new era of persecution. So the first klan was Christmas Eve and now Thanksgiving. Racism, tainting holidays since the 1860s.

So This is amazing: the Atlanta constitution newspaper actually printed a notice of the clan's resurrection.

The title in bold:

"KLAN IS ESTABLISHED WITH IMPRESSIVENESS"

[I wish people would describe my accomplishments that way. Shane has showered with impressiveness]

Impressive services of the past week were those conducted on the night of Thanksgiving at the top of Stone Mountain.

The exercises were held by fifteen klansmen who gathered at the behest o their chieftian,

W. J. Simmons, and marked the foundation of the invisible empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The new secret organization is founded with a view to taking an active part in the betterment of man ...[now I'm not saying I'm great at keeping a secret, but if I had a secret to keep, I probably wouldn't publish it in the local newspaper]

The rites incident to the founding of the order were most interesting and the occasion will be remembered long by the participants." Why does this feel like it was written in 1915 by ChatGPT Simmons next created promotional materials in which he described the clan as "a classy order of the highest class." You and I would not be admitted, thankfully.

Only classy men of the classiest possible class are welcome to join this very classy organization.

Now one of the things to remember and that I think is easy for us to overlook is that the second clan was not a radical organization in its day. This was no longer an extremist group of shady terrorists operating under the radar and attempting to radicalize the unsuspecting innocent masses. This new version of the clan wasn't aiming to overthrow the government; in fact it was jingoistic and pro-American, and thus much more socially acceptable. Once again, the original concept wasn't necessarily racism, but rather the racism was just a reflection of the

time. This was the era of "gone with the wind"; the image of the confederate south was being rehabilitated, and reimagined as a noble lost cause. Many Americans believed that racial integration had failed, which was true, because it hadn't ever really been genuinely attempted in good faith. frankly, regardless of where you were in America, in the 1920s 90% of white people were pretty damn racist.

The founder of this new version of the Ku Klux Klan, William Joseph Simmons was undoubtedly a racist, but mostly a ridiculous human being. he's hard to take seriously even though he created a monster. He's Literally the dumbest doctor Frankenstein in history.

Simmons only led the clan for a total of five years, and during that time the only event he organized was a March during a veterans parade during which he paid 20 black men to wear white robes so that attendance would look more impressive. You can see he was very committed to his principles. his next endeavor was purchasing a down on its luck Atlanta college called Lanier and trying to turn it into a whites only segregated university; it promptly went broke. The only Smart thing Simmons ever did was employ the services of a marketing group called "the southern publicity association" to advertise the klan. This worked, you might say. The clan's membership swelled to 85,000 within the first six months and would hit a peak of around 4 million members by the mid 1920s. That is an incredibly

fast and impressive rate of growth, so how did one marketing firm possibly accomplish this stratospheric achievement? Because the second incarnation of the clan was also a multilevel marketing scheme.

Recruiters were hired and tasked with bringing in new members via incentives that moved up the chain, with the people at the top receiving the bulk of the money and recruiters on the bottom rungs receiving very little of the trickled down funds. A classic MLM. The second clan was basically Amway.

I'm going to quote from HATRED AND PROFITS:

GETTING UNDER THE HOOD OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

Roland G. Fryer, Jr

Steven D. Levit

in the bottom tier of the organization, individual Klansmen, or Ghouls, were organized into local Klaverns. Exalted Cyclopes presided over the Klaverns - which at the Klan's peak typically had as many as 200 active members— and organized Klan activities, including monthly meetings.

In addition to the main Klan hierarchy, there was an auxiliary structure...that existed primarily as a source of income generation for those involved. Klan members generated a tremendous amount of revenue. Each Ghoul paid a \$10 initiation fee (equivalent to \$115 in current dollars),

\$6.50 to buy an official Klan robe (which cost roughly \$2 to make), an annual membership fee of \$5, an imperial tax of \$1.80, and was also encouraged to purchase other Klan-sanctioned merchandise including swords, Bibles, helmets, dry-cleaning, and life insurance.

Joining the Klan was not a cheap endeavor. Using the numbers above, the first year of membership costs \$23.30 (roughly \$275 in 2006 dollars) and subsequent years were \$6.80 (approximately \$80 in 2006 dollars). At its peak in 1924, the Klan conservatively generated annual revenues from all sources of at least \$25 million - equivalent to \$300 million in current dollars. Only a small portion of this revenue was required to fund basic operations

The period of the Klan's membership explosion was also the period when their political power is believed to have reached its pinnacle, especially in Indiana, Tennessee, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Oregon, where the Klan controlled portions of the state governments."

From behind the bastards,

"It was a Pyramid scheme...this economic growth was possible thanks to an enormous sales force started in nineteen twenty one by that PR firm and soon over a thousand people strong...the Grand Dragons made bank, and so did the sales force. The US was split into nine domains, with a goblin in charge of recruitment. For each, the

goblin hires a King Klegal who hires a bunch of Klegal's (the regular grunt sales force of the endeavor). They made four dollars off of each membership. The remaining three fifty was sent up the recruiting structure, with the person in charge of sales in the state, the King Klegal getting a dollar, the regional sales overseer a great Goblin, got five cents, the national sales overseer and Imperial Kleigal got a dollar twenty five, [etc] So the Invisible Empire sold robes, flags, dry cleaning services, candy, every kind of thing. [Here's a quote from the book the second Coming of the Ku klux Klan] " a kluxer's nifty knife (every word in that was spelled with a K) which was described as a " real one hundred percent knife for one hundred percent Americans could be bought for a dollar twenty five. [not a fifty percent knife...that would be a bayonet. I would actually prefer that my knife be 50% gun. continuing:] A member could buy a broach for his wife, A zircon studded fiery cross. A larger cross that a man could wear on the watch chain he displayed across his chest cost two ninety. For only five dollars, you could get allegedly a fourteen carrot gold filled ring with a 10 karat solid gold clan emblem on a fiery red stone."

This feels like the racist Home Shopping Network. But wait, there's more! Now As I mentioned before, it's important to remember that at the time the clan was basically an Elks Lodge with a touch of white supremacy. The second incarnation of the clan was

huge, and it did commit atrocities, I'm not absolving this organization one bit, but most of the time the clan on the twenties was just a multilevel marketing boys club. The primary public stance the KKK endorsed was actually prohibition, and the clan often courted the female vote, publicly supporting women's suffrage. Some chapters of the clan fielded a baseball team, and would play against other farm teams in the local leagues. The clan had a publishing press and a record press, there were clan song recordings and albums. We're talking somewhere between 2 and 4 million Americans identifying as clan members at this point. Appealing to the racism of the day was just a convenient marketing and recruiting tool. If you want people to join your organization, tell them you hate the same people they hate. the enemy of my enemy is my social club. Again, to be clear, there was still violence and terrorism, clan chapters would dispense what they referred to as vigilante Justice against Black people, Jews, catholics, and immigrants, but the violence wasn't the primary purpose nor the hallmark of the 1920s era ku klux klan. In someways they had returned to their bullying roots. A classic example was when members of the clan surrounded the house of a young Malcolm X and threatened his pregnant mother while his father was away, warning that they should stop riling up the other "colored people" in the area and know their place. There was a lot of this kind of blustery bullying and intimidation, still

pretty bad but less murderery than the clan of the 1860s.

So Eight years after the founding of this new KKK version, member Hiram Wesley Evans staged a coup and ousted Simmons as leader. It was not violent or dramatic, it was a business maneuver, fitting for what it essentially become a for-profit company, but it marked the beginning of the end for clan Mark two. The ku klux klan would once again devolve into disarray through infighting and a series of scandals, the culmination of which was when grand dragon of twenty three states, DC Stevenson, was convicted of kidnapping, raping, and killing his secretary. He was actually convicted of second-degree murder...his secretary had committed suicide in the wake of the attack, but it was pretty obvious why, so fair play. The crime was pretty horrific, I read all about this, his victim Madge Oberholtzer actually died in part due to a staff infection from the bites that he had inflicted on her during multiple rapes. Oof. When Stevenson was denied a pardon by the governor, he turned on his fellow clan members and threw everyone under the bus, exposing scandals and corruption and bribery within the organization's ranks. with the clan's "law and order" bona fides now thoroughly undermined, more and more politicians and thought leaders began speaking out in protest. The Jewish anti-defamation league arose as a response to the persecution and lynching of Jews, and as membership

in the clan gradually lost its luster and in certain areas even became shameful, newspapers started publishing lists of local klan members, driving more and more members out of the organization altogether.

By around 1930, the KKK had dropped from over 4 million members to just a few hundred thousand.

So the modern KKK is technically the tattered remnants of the third incarnation that rose during the civil rights era, and was a throwback to the most menacing and destructive version of the the late 1800s. this is the KKK that most of us know, the white hooded good old boys who burned crosses on lawns and fire bombed black churches and murdered NAACP organizers like Medgar Evers. To get a sense of the kind of terrorism we're talking about, In the 1940s KKK chapters in Birmingham Alabama began bombing the houses of upwardly mobile Black people who moved into so-called white neighborhoods. "By mid-1949, there were so many charred house carcasses that the area [College Hills] was informally named Dynamite Hill." The city of Birmingham was often referred to at the time as Bombingham.

But the cultural tides were changing; as the civil rights movement made genuine progress, the clan found itself increasingly marginalized. Law-enforcement even in the south begin targeting the clan, while the FBI infiltrated clan chapters and Congress worked to pass more legislation

targeting hate groups.

to say that the clan of today is a shadow of its former self would be generous. From its high of 2 to 4 million members in the 1920s, the clan is down to an estimated 3 or 4 thousand . but that doesn't mean that its mission or philosophy isn't still around in force, it's just that most white supremacists have moved on to other organizations that don't have such a problematic history and tainted public image. The ku klux klan of today is a loose network of small mostly white trash underground hate groups clinging to the idea of a romantic bygone era of glorious unfettered hate. But it's still around. you could probably still join, if you're a very confused racist podcast listener who took a wrong turn at Stephen Crowder and sat through 45 minutes of our annoying woke lecturing.

We have a new maniac! Four of them, this is making up for last time. Thank you so much everyone. And by everyone I mean Victoria Overbay, sounds like a scenic Canadian Paradise, Levi styles, Jean maven I assume, nigath Ali, whose name I am intentionally refusing to say correctly because she's a friend of mine and I know it will piss her off, and Christopher Hayes, he updated his membership to the highest tier, he became a maniac, and then nice again I forget you can do that but I'm always

excited when people do.

New \$10.00 member! 🎉 Meet Victoria Overbay



Victoria Overbay just became a \$10.00 member!



Victoria Overbay
notvikki74@yahoo.com

New \$10.00 member! 🎉 Meet Levi Stiles



Levi Stiles just became a \$10.00 member!



Levi Stiles
levistiles95@yahoo.com



Christopher Hays just edited their membership from \$5.00 to \$10.00.



Christopher Hays
christopher.w.hays@gmail.com

New \$10.00 member! 🎉 Meet Nighath Ali



Nighath Ali just became a \$10.00 member!



Nighath Ali
nighath.ali@gmail.com

MFFI



I love comedy but it takes a lot to make me laugh out loud but no matter how bad my days going Duncan and Shane never fail to make me laugh. Hilarious podcast has an episode for everyone.

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