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Ku Klux Klan

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dential nomination in 1936. In June 1940, on the eve of World War II, he sacrificed his position as a leader of the Republican Party to accept the position of Secretary of the Navy in Franklin D. Roosevelt's bipartisan Cabinet. Traveling extensively to inspect the fleet and far-flung naval bases, he served in Washington until his death.

See also: Progressive Party, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt

James V. Saturno

Edward I. Koch (1924–)

Flamboyant mayor of New York City. Edward Irving Koch was born to poor Polish Jews in the Bronx, fought in the infantry in World War II, and studied at City College and New York University Law School. He served as a feisty and outspoken U.S. Congressman and then as Mayor of New York City for three terms, capturing the support of both the machine and reform factions.

Koch began his political career by joining the Village Independent Democrats and the Tammany machine of Carmine DeSapio; he became district leader, then a civil rights lawyer in the early 1960s, and finally a city councillor in 1966. He reduced drug dealing in Washington Square, pleasing many Italian-Americans in Greenwich Village. In 1968 he was elected to Congress from the Silk Stocking District, voting for weapons cuts, Israel, school busing, federal aid for abortions, public broadcasting, public transport, consumer protection, tax relief for single adults, the Cooper-Church Amendment to end the bombing of Cambodia, and the Privacy Act of 1974.

Koch first ran for mayor in 1973, withdrawing because he lacked funds. During the fiscal crisis of 1975, he obtained federal loan guarantees over President Gerald Ford's objections. In 1977 he became mayor aided by television commercials written by David Garth, arguing against criminal corruption, callous charisma, and clubhouse clout, and for creative competence. He protected Jewish and Catholic taxpayers but disappointed Blacks and Hispanics. In 1982, he lost the governorship to Mario Cuomo, never campaigning comfortably in upstate New York. Koch required merit selection in central offices, but elsewhere he allowed patronage, and by 1987 Bronx and Queens leaders were being indicted for corruption. He eventually lost in his quest for a fourth term as mayor in 1989 to the Democratic primary winner, African-American David Dinkins.

See also: Carmine DeSapio, Gerald Ford, David Garth

Jeremy R. T. Lewis

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Ku Klux Klan

A perennial debate in the study of American politics is whether a fundamental social consensus has undergirded American politics or whether deep social conflict has dominated the American political system. Although it does not resolve the debate, the history of the Ku Klux Klan bears directly on it.

Understanding the relevance of the Klan's history to this debate demands abandonment of a common view of the Klan—namely, that the KKK is an ancient, dramatic fixture of violent white supremacist politics in the South. A more accurate view of the Klan would emphasize that there has not been one Klan, but three Klans, each with a separate history and its own political aims; secondly, each of the Klans emerged during periods of intense national conflict over who legitimately belonged in the American electorate and in American society. The history of the Klan thus suggests that violence and coercion have been significant elements in the development of American electoral politics.

The first Klan, a group that formed in 1865 and flourished until a Republican-controlled federal government suppressed it shortly before the 1872 presidential election, was modeled in part on informal, antebellum slave patrols and was often staffed by Confederate Army veterans. It arose in the context both of the rapid expansion of the southern electorate to include millions of freedmen and of the Republican Party's efforts to institute a southern organization. The first Klan was, in effect, the paramilitary arm of the Democratic Party in the South; its purpose was to intimidate talented Black and white Republican leaders and to weaken or eliminate local institutions (e.g., churches, newspapers, and schools) that supported Reconstruction and the new two-party system in the South. In part because those southern state militias controlled by Republican governors were

weak and ineffective and in part because the number of federal Army units stationed in the South was dwindling, the Klan succeeded in badly weakening local and state Republican organizations. By the time the federal government got around to prosecuting the KKK in 1871 and 1872, irreparable damage had been done to fragile Republican organizations, helping to set the stage for the redemption of the South by conservative Democrats.

The second Klan (1915–1925) was a vast social movement, like the earlier nativist Know-Nothings. It was only partly white supremacist, for the KKK was also avowedly nationalist. The first Klan venerated the Confederate flag; the second Klan venerated the Stars and Stripes. White supremacism was not even its main theme: KKK politics were primarily antiradical, anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, and anti-Semitic. Emphasizing patriotic symbols, the Klan's purpose was to popularize a fundamentalist social vision of a supposedly purified America.

In the early 1920s the second Klan attached itself to state and local Republican parties in the North and West and to the Democratic Party in the South. The Klan's influence over state and local politics in several jurisdictions—Alabama, Oregon, Texas, Colorado, Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Ohio—was extraordinarily great, and KKK votes often made the difference in senatorial and congressional contests. In Oklahoma in 1923 and 1924, the Klan fought and won a local civil war against a farmer-labor faction in the Oklahoma Democratic Party.

The scope of the second Klan's influence in the early 1920s was related to the resurgence of Protestant evangelical fundamentalism, to Prohibitionism, to fears of aliens and radicals that lingered from the Red Scare of 1919, and (in certain parts of the South) to the survival of a racist version of populism. But by 1925 a national backlash, fueled in part by outrage over much-publicized corruption within the Klan's national administrative arm, left the second Klan disorganized and weak.

The third Klan, still alive in the 1990s, is a small, although still dangerous, hate group that emerged during the "second Reconstruction" of the South in the 1950s and 1960s. Like its two predecessors, it emerged in the context of national conflict over who belonged in the American electorate and society. The civil rights revolution brought millions of African-Americans into active politics in the South. But unlike its two predecessors, the third Klan quickly became illegitimate among southerners and the object of constant federal surveillance. Indeed, at one point in the 1960s about one-fifth of all KKK members may have been FBI informers.

In the early 1990s, ex-Klansmen have gained some electoral support in the South running as Republicans. But the Klan is still weak. Its relative weakness strongly suggests that American politics has in certain respects become much more consensual and tolerant. Interestingly, however, the first Klan created a model for linking coercive tactics to electoral politics, a paradigm that was adapted to new purposes in later periods, once successfully, once unsuccessfully. Whether that model will ever be successful again is problematic, but the Klan's unusual history can still inspire a debate over the limits of tolerance in American electoral politics.

See also: Know-Nothings, Reconstruction, Red Scare

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Thomas H. Kuchel (1910–)

Republican Senate leader from California. Thomas H. Kuchel (pronounced *Kee*-kul) of California was Senate Republican whip from 1959 to 1969; his rise and fall mirrored the fate of the liberal wing that he championed. After serving in the California State Legislature and the U.S. Navy, Kuchel was appointed the state's controller in 1946 by Governor Earl Warren. He won election to a full term later that year. After Richard Nixon's election as Vice President in 1952, Warren named Kuchel to replace Nixon in the U.S. Senate.

Kuchel's liberalism helped his 1956 bid for election in his own right, when he gained many Democratic votes. In 1959 it boosted him further. When GOP Senators chose conservative Everett Dirksen of Illinois as party leader, they sought balance by naming Kuchel party whip. In 1962, an otherwise disappointing year for Republicans, Kuchel kept his seat by 728,000 votes, becoming California's top Republican.

In the 1960s he clashed with the rising conservative wing of the GOP, both on Capitol Hill and in California. In 1964 he served as Republi-