



# **Notre Dame vs. The Klan: How the Fighting Irish Defeated the Ku Klux Klan**

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Todd tells of the weekend in May 1924 when members of the anti-Catholic organization and students at the Catholic university fought in South Bend, Indiana. To that conflict he traces the decline of the Klan in Indiana and the acceptance of the university and Catholics more generally in the US. Annotation 2004 Book News, Inc., Portland, OR (booknews)

## Notre Dame vs. The Klan: How the Fighting Irish Defeated the Ku Klux Klan Details

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## From Reader Review Notre Dame vs. The Klan: How the Fighting Irish Defeated the Ku Klux Klan for online ebook

### **Matt says**

THIS was very interesting and something I never knew had happened. Also, very scary how many Indiana politicians were Klan members during the post war era. I highly recommend this.

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### **Tony C says**

As an ND alum, I was naturally interested in the story of my alma mater taking on the Klan. Who doesn't like the idea of their school fighting against evil?

While the story was built around the fighting between Notre Dame students and Klan members one one weekend in South Bend, it also provided a fascinating look at the origins of the school as well as the KKK's rise to power in Indiana. I had no idea just how entrenched the Klan had become in my home state. Crazy!

I'd definitely recommend this to any history buff, but especially to anyone with a tie to Notre Dame, the state of Indiana, or Catholicism.

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### **Michelle says**

Though I would rarely be interested in a historical non-fiction book, this was fascinating. It chronicles the birth of the University of Notre Dame with in-depth introspective characterizations of the men who made Notre Dame what it is today. Right alongside this, we learn of the birth of the Klu Klux Klan and the individuals who not only popularized the organization in the 1920's but who also led it to its inevitable death. Again, this was an absolutely fascinating read. Even if is not your genre of choice, I would suggest you pick it up and give it a try. It will suck you and keep you reading until the end.

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### **Lucy says**

this is very scary in this age of Trump as this book has me convinced he is following D.C.Stephenson's playbook (minus the psychopath part). Trump's manipulation of the fearful to achieve cynical goals parallels Stephenson's use of the Klan

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### **Sean says**

It's interesting to think that in 1920, 3 out of 4 white, Protestant males in the state of Indiana were Klan members -- including the Governor. This translated to approximately 400,000 members. Ninety years later, Indiana's electoral votes help swing the election for Obama.

## Mary says

Okay - so I am a Domer. (Or a Notre Damer, in the odd language of the book.) That probably makes me more interested in this book than the next person. That said, it was an interesting of story (of a Klan rally/riot in South Bend) that I had never heard before.

The concise re-telling of the University's history was informative. More interesting -- in 1920, 400,000 white male Protestants in Indiana were Klan members. That was 3 out of 4 of them and included the Governor. I didn't know this either. File this story under history is fascinating.

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## Jim Mullin says

An excellent narrative history written about the period when the Ku Klux Klan pinnacled to its high point in U.S. history. This was in the early 1920's with a crusade against illegal immigration of Irish, Poles, and Italians combined with a vitriolic hatred of Catholicism. Sound familiar? Just substitute Hispanics, Syrians and Islam for today's hatred's. The University of Notre Dame is located in South Bend IN which was rife with Klansmen The book details how the priests at Notre Dame with stood these attacks; along with presenting an informative history of Notre Dame and the Klan.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and couldn't put it down until I finished it. I highly recommend it

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## Len Knighton says

A wonderful book, chronicling the conflict between the KKK and University of Notre Dame, in reality a microcosm of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics that has endured for centuries. A feature of this book is the author's stories within the story. While I have considered this style of writing in a book I'm writing, my intrusions on the narrative are of events within the context of the main story, not of 60 years in the future. I enjoyed those asides but wonder if they are needed.

I strongly recommended this book to one of my best friends who is a "subway alumnus".

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## Cory says

I found this book at my local thrift store. At first, looking at the cover, I thought it was a fiction book. When I read the back and found out that this was in fact a non-fiction book, I put it in my cart. I had no idea that the Klan held so much political power in Indiana back in the day. I was also ignorant on how that effected citizens. There is so much more I would like to say about this book, but, I do not want to give anything away. I would recommend this book to my friends who like History.

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### **Katy Orenchuk says**

I initially sought out this book because, as an ND grad, I had several folks mention the story to me and I didn't have any background on it. The book itself is well-written and engaging. I very much appreciate the set up of the parallel stories of Father Walsh and D.C. Stephenson and how this event played a role of the larger history of both Catholics and the Klan in Indiana. As a Hoosier myself, I was aware of Stephenson and his role in the Klan in Indiana, but this book shed new light onto this history. Overall, great read and I couldn't put it down. The author did a great job in creating a story that just couldn't be ignored.

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### **Jenny says**

It's interesting how you can live in a place but never know some of it's history. Having lived at Notre Dame I had a vested interest and familiarity.

What I found most interesting was how the Klan was able to grow so successfully in Indiana. It was a little disturbing to read some of their arguments and recognize that some of the exact rhetoric is being used today.

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### **Keith Padgett says**

As a Catholic, I really enjoyed this book. It was fascinating, especially in today's world with some having anti-Muslim views, to read and understand that Catholics were also treated in a similar fashion in this country.

Also, the book does an EXCELLENT job of teaching the history of Notre Dame. This is an excellent book and a quick read. I could not put this one down.

If you are a fan of Notre Dame, or a Catholic, I would highly suggest your read this book.

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### **Nick Junker says**

The KKK usually evokes thoughts of racial bigotry. That was the story of their beginnings in the South. This fascinating book treats a little known chapter in this organization's sordid history: anti-Catholicism and anti-immigration. These biases under the pretense of "patriotism" mobilized the KKK in the North under the leadership of interesting yet nefarious man. There in the midst of the madness overtaking the state of Indiana was an oasis of Catholic higher education in South Bend. This book describes the emergence of Notre Dame and its football program as a Midwest culture and institution, and how this placed them on a crash course with D.C. Stephenson and his white Protestant army. As a Catholic and a Notre Dame fan I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

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### **Cathy says**

Very interesting book about the rise of Notre Dame and the rise and fall, thankfully, of the Klan. I have a far

greater appreciation of the term "Fighting Irish" now. Book is well-written and engaging. The awful and irrational hatred towards a group merely due to religion, in the book's case, Catholicism, is profoundly disturbing. Unfortunately, society does not seem to be able to learn to dispel such hate and is destined to repeat the sins of the past.

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### **Matt Wallenhorst says**

I found this to be an interesting look at a part of American history that is often glossed over growing up in the Midwest. Being catholic and a lover of football, watching Notre Dame was like going to church growing up and I very much enjoyed the way Todd Tucker weaved in the personal histories of Rockne, Fr. Walsh and DC Stephenson into an entertaining narrative.

When most people think of the Klan, they only see it as a terrorist group against African-Americans and while they are not wrong, they did not realize that the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, when it was going through a revival, was a major nativist group against African-Americans, immigrants, catholics, Jews, etc. This story highlights that very well and discusses the feelings that much of Protestant America had that led them to turning to a group like the KKK. Mr. Tucker also expertly shows how the likes of DC Stephenson became a political puppet master and major public relations person for the hate group. His rise and fall was fascinating, disgusting and sad all at the same time, three feelings that are really hard to get right.

I found the history of Fr. Walsh intriguing as well. His fight for influence over the University of Notre Dame, really its soul so to speak, his war experience and his handling of the young men bent on a fight with the KKK. The anti-catholic sentiment found in the USA is a world I've thankfully not seen much of, but Tucker brings it alive in this book and seeing how Fr. Walsh had to balance what he wanted Notre Dame to be, the practicalities of running a university, the politics with the city of South Bend and his personality clash with an iconic coach were a fun read. His ability to not blink in a difficult situation and swallow his pride to allow for Rockne to help ease the tension was a great example to learn from.

Overall, it was a great picture of a part of America that the history books do not often get right. During the Great Gatsby Roaring 20s, the Midwest was a mix of booming industrial revolution era cities blooming and the small town farms that had led to its population growth in the first place. It's complexion was changing with the continual arrival of immigrants and migrants from the deep South that were African Americans. The way Mr. Tucker weaves in and out of the personal stories is what made it an easy read for a non-fiction book. Go Irish!

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