

In the Works:  
**100 Percent American?**

A new play about the K.K.K. attempt to take control in Colorado

(c) 2017-2021 Susan Motika<sup>i</sup>

This documentary play is about the takeover of Colorado by the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's. The project tells the story of the Klan ascension and decline using original and adopted documentary sources, such as newspaper articles, transcripts, oral histories, and video and music of the time period. The style uses a "Moment theater" script, similar to The Laramie Project; a great example of how documentary theatre can move the hearts and minds of people. We've documented historical research beginning in 2010, gathering local and personal recollections.

"Colorado had the dubious distinction of being the number two state where Klansmen who donned their hoods and engaged in a crusade to ensure that "100 Per Cent Americanism" would characterize the nation's society during the nineteen twenties.<sup>ii</sup> Our on-stage dramatic true story of this post-World War I Ku Klux Klan in Colorado will give audiences an immersive experience and better understanding of this phase of the Invisible Empire's history, which 'has been lost in the wakes of America's two more publicized Klan movements.'

Students of Colorado history are aware of the role of the Ku Klux Klan in state politics: prominent members Stapleton (mayor) and Morley (governor) were elected, the Klan controlled the lower house of the state legislature, and Read Means as U.S. Senator. The enigmatic Denver physician who dominated the organization during its heyday, John Galen Locke is confronted and countered by the Denver District Attorney Philip Van Cice.

Author Susan Motika is a Denver, Colorado native.<sup>iii</sup>

	<p>KKK</p> <p><i>Rise of the KKK</i></p> <p>In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan rose to political prominence in Colorado. Its influence spread from the Denver Klavern to Arvada in 1923. The Klan met regularly upstairs in the First National Bank. A Klan flagpole was erected on Grandview Avenue at Webster Street. Cross burnings occurred on South Table Mountain in Golden and on Carr Street hill in Arvada.</p> <p><i>Klan March in Arvada</i></p> <p>On August 8, 1925, women of the Klan marched to Arvada, igniting a cross on the steps of the Shrine of St. Anne. This unbearable insult was matched by a pilgrimage on September 25. Ten thousand protesters, men and boys from Arvada and North Denver, marched from Regis College to Arvada. They were led by a band and uniformed members of Catholic organizations. A service of consecration was led from an altar on the church steps.</p> <p><i>Influence Ebbs</i></p> <p>This 1925 public demonstration ended Klan activity in Arvada. The next year marked the beginning of the end of Klan activity throughout Colorado.</p>  
 <p>Cover of "Hooded Empire" © 1983 Robert Goldberg</p>	<p>The KKK March in Arvada, CO, 1924</p>

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<sup>ii</sup> Historian Robert Alan Goldberg, author of "Hooded Empire" (1983)

<sup>iii</sup> Susan Motika's extensive hands-on experience includes employment and advocacy at the Denver District Attorney, also, family empowerment in Denver neighborhoods with Making Connections-Denver and director positions with the Colorado and Boulder County Departments of Public Health. In Boston, as an attorney she represented low-income families at Legal Services, and elders and crime victims at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. She studied theatre and journalism at Boston University.