

Claire Dickhut, Journalism

Year in School: Sophomore
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Rex Campbell, Rural Sociology
Funding Sources: Agricultural Institute Fund, Stroeter Endowment

The impacts of lynchings on African-American out-migration from rural Missouri, 1865-1935

I am studying the impact of lynching on the out-migration of African Americans from rural Missouri in the time period of 1865 to 1935. Fall semester began with a four page list of people who had been lynched in Missouri beginning as early as the 1850's and going as late as 1980. There are four different versions of the list, sorted by last name, sorted by date, sorted by type of crime, and sorted by county. The list sorted by county was the one used because it was the easiest to reference. All of fall semester was spent in the State Historical Society newspaper room. I would look up the county, find what newspapers were in print at the time of the lynching, and then scan those newspapers on microfilm looking for articles pertaining to the lynching. This whole process was done for every entry on the list. This semester has been spent gathering information from the articles and analyzing that information. There are several different things that are looked at in the articles. I look at the type of mob, what law enforcement officers were involved, what kind of crime was committed, what adjectives are used through out, and the opinions given in the article. By looking at these articles and the information found, we are able to gain a better understanding of the impact and dynamics of the lynchings. It also provides insight to the choices African Americans made about their residences. By reading the articles we hope to gain an understanding of why lynchings occurred and their impacts.