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## LSU HISTORICAL DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

### Death at the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Geography of Lynching in the Deep South, 1882 to 1910.

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[Mary Elizabeth Hines](#), *Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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#### Date of Award

1992

#### Document Type

Dissertation

#### Degree Name

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

#### First Advisor

Sam Bowers Hilliard

#### Abstract

This research explores the county-level lynching record of four Deep South states--Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi--to discover the spatial and temporal distribution of lynching within the region and its relationship to social and economic conditions. The period of 1882 to 1910 is selected because lynching reached its highest levels in those decades. Demographic and economic variables from the United States censuses characterize Deep South counties as urban or rural and rich or poor. The physiography and historical attributes of counties are also considered. The research objective is to improve understanding of lynching in the postbellum Deep South through geographic analysis. The research methods determine: (1) counties where lynching was endemic and explores the causes; (2) the relationships between demographic, economic, physical and historical characteristics of counties with high rates of lynching; (3) if and when legal execution was substituted for lynching; and (4) that the random and episodic nature of lynching resulted from social disruption and imitative behavior rather than from demographic and economic causes.

#### Recommended Citation

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