

1997

# Growth and Development of Street Gangs

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Growth and Development

of Street Gangs  
(TITLE)

BY

Audrey D. Guymon

1940 -

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1997

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
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## **Abstract**

This field study of the growth and development of street gangs was conducted in the spring of 1996 at a medium security prison utilizing a semi-structured interview with 69 inmates who were known present or former gang members. Since the sample was taken from a population of convicted felons, the results reflect the environment of the participants and may not be representative of gang members as a whole.

The field study determined that the majority of the participants came from two parent homes, had joined the gang between the ages of 9 and 15, lacked positive male role models, and came from both urban and nonurban areas. Peer or family pressure, survival and economics were the major factors for joining the gangs.

## DEDICATION

This field study is dedicated to my husband, Richard C. Guymon, who provides the rudder to my sails.

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## CHAPTER 1

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The growth and development of street gangs within a community has many adverse effects upon that community. It impacts its citizens, its schools and the crime rate. The recruitment of gang members and the community selected as a target for gang development is often a carefully constructed plan by gang members to increase their drug trafficking business or to increase the area of their controlled neighborhoods. For this study, the definition of gangs was limited to those groups involved in criminal activity.

Klein (1971) defined the gang as follows:

we shall use the term (street gang) to refer to any denotable...group (of adolescents or young adults) who (a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in the neighborhood, (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name), and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of (illegal) incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighborhood residents and/or enforcement agencies (Fagan, 1989, p. 642).

One factor in the various statistics in gang activity and the street gang population is the use of differing definitions of what constitutes a gang. A gang may be defined as groups of young adults who have regular contact with each other and a structure of rules or a group engaged in criminal activity. The Chicago Police Department defines a street gang as an association of individuals who exhibit the following characteristics: gang name or recognizable symbols, a geographic territory, a regular meeting pattern and an organized, continuous course of criminality (Block &

Block 1993). Gathering statistics on gang-related crimes is also difficult due to definitions of what constitutes a gang-related crime. To determine if a crime is gang-related, the Chicago Police Department investigators analyze the situation using the following criteria: representing, recruitment, extortion, turf violation, prestige, personal conflict, vice or retaliation. Representing refers to gang members showing affiliation or alliances by the use of clothing, colors, language or hand signs. These hand signs can also signify disrespect for a rival gang. Intimidation of a victim or witness can also signal recruitment practices. Extortion is often used to force a person to join or to pay for group actions. Neighborhoods are divided into gang controlled areas or turf. By journeying into another gang's known turf or violating this turf with signs or graffiti, criminal incidents can result. Gang members add to their individual reputations or gain gang rank by committing offenses involving prestige, which also tend to glorify the gang or add to the gang mythology. Personal conflicts can result from either changes in leadership or physical retaliation against other gang members. These assaults, known as violations, are used to control the rank and file gang members. Activities involving the illegal actions of gang members involve various criminal activities. Gang members also retaliate against rival gangs in acts of revenge for offenses against gang members or turf (Block & Block 1993).

Fleisher (1995) adds to the other definitions of gang by defining street gangs as:

A gang is a social group composed of adolescents who form a weak social network with intergenerational longevity: ego has natal or extended family relatives, or both, who were, or still are, gang members. A gang has a coherent, expressive culture, which denotes the network's outer social boundaries through various symbolic markers such as distinctive name, origin tales, specialized vocabulary, and secular rituals and traditions. The unique distinguishing feature of a gang's expressive culture, as opposed to other types of adolescent symbolism, is its fatalistic ritualism predicated on a mythology of death (Fleisher 1995 p. 147).

Fleisher states that the intergenerational quality or a group lasting for more than one generation is the determining factor in differentiating between gangs and delinquent groups. Whichever definition is used, the street gangs have become an influence both within the metropolitan centers and the small towns of the United States. Their culture has penetrated the media, popular music and clothing styles.

Gangs are an enigma to the average parent and community leader. In order to prepare to handle gang problems, the history, development, structure and recruitment techniques of gangs must be understood. In Danville, Illinois, a town of 30,000, the police chief has consistently denied that gangs exist in the area. Parents finally pointed out the extensive gang graffiti and the gang recruitment going on in the city parks. Wayne C. Torok and Kenneth S. Trump (1994) point out the message presented to gang members if law enforcement denies the existence of gangs. This denial

promotes gang development by providing gang members with a feeling of immunity to prosecution, and it increases the victimization of the community.

In order to deal with the street gangs and channel their negativity into positivity, educators, administrators and community leaders must have knowledge of the gangs. Teachers must be able to recognize the gang symbols and hand signs to cope with classroom problems. If a school is controlled by gang members and turf boundaries are set, the administration must be aware of the problems which are then created. Unless gangs are recognized as a sociological structure and dealt with in an intelligent manner by the educators and community members, more of our children will be lost as school dropouts or street children.

This project was a review of the historical growth and development of street gangs, their recruitment practices, the profiles of the gang members, and the correlation between gang growth and the increase in crime. This project viewed the four major street gangs as a social phenomenon in order to understand their grip on both urban and rural communities.

This study addressed the following five questions:

1. How do gangs recruit members?
2. How do gangs increase their power?
3. What does the gang offer to potential gang members?

4. At what age were the participants in this sample recruited?
5. What were the profiles of the gang members in this sample?

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### History of Gang Development

In 1927, Frederic M. Thrasher published the results of his seven year study of gangs and gangland in Chicago. This work still stands as a classic in the case study and general-survey methodology. In his study, Thrasher used census and court records, personal observations, personal documents written by the gang members and interviews. Since the method of selecting the gang members is unknown, only the book's standing as a classic is its test of reliability and validity. Due to the broad area studied, there are few specific details of each gang. Instead Thrasher paints a broad portrait of the social structure of the neighborhoods, gangs and life styles. Thrasher did not state a hypothesis but described his work as "an exploratory survey" and the "formations" of the book as "tentative hypotheses" rather than as scientific generalizations.

In his interviews with gang members, Thrasher found social disorganization to be a factor in the group forming into a gang. Fagan (1989) also found disorganization to be a factor in gang membership among Hispanic gang members. The gang exists as a reflection of the society from which it grows, and the leader who controls it.

#### Gang Control

X Gangs must control their members in order to maintain their unity of purpose and organization. The members are

indoctrinated into the community by subordinating their personal wishes to accept the group beliefs. Conflict is one of the major means of solidifying the gang into a cohesive group and provides morale with reinforcement of fellowship and enthusiasm. Social control of gang members is solidified with the use of slogans, symbols, handshakes, signs and even the name of the gang. This becomes the rallying force of the gang. Thrasher found that gangs were shown to be capable of complex planning, deliberation and cooperation to gain their ends.

The gang code is determined by the behavior patterns of the group, the development of primary group sentiments and the group within its own environment. Loyalty is a universal requirement of the gang code. This loyalty forbids the gang member telling about the other members. Severe punishment is used to maintain this loyalty. Group opinion, physical punishment, ridicule and applause, mob action, common experiences and symbols are used to maintain control of the group. Murder can also be a method of control used by the gang to eliminate those who are disloyal to gang traditions.

### **Illegal Activity**

In 1994, Howell analyzed the latest gang research and found that gangs are involved in drug trafficking just as the gangs analyzed by Thrasher were involved in illegal liquor production during prohibition. He also found that gang conflicts are still primarily over turf and status.

In the more than sixty years since Thrasher studied the 1,313 street gangs in Chicago, the gangs have not changed extensively. Gangs still control their members with physical violence now called violations. Gangs also still dress in common colors or styles, use hand signals and secret words for communication and gain power through criminal activity. The structure of the gangs and their involvement in crime and violence is still basically the same as it was during Thrasher's study. However, drug trafficking is now the primary source of income for the street gangs. The gangs now use more violent crimes and are armed with automatic weapons, which provides them with more firepower. The 26th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools listed as the number one problem by those polled as "fighting, violence, and gangs" which shared the top place with "lack of discipline" (Clay & Aquila 1994). This 1994 poll found 18% of the respondents listed fighting, violence and gangs as a major problem as opposed to only 1% listing this category in 1985. The growth of youth gangs was cited as a very important problem by 72% of the respondents.

Sullivan (1989) surveyed and interviewed adolescents from three neighborhoods in Brooklyn, New York, to determine the reasons that adolescents committed crimes. He determined that the reason these high risk adolescents committed crimes was an integral part of the patterns of violence existing within the neighborhoods. The noneconomic

functions of violence and crime in the neighborhoods also were factors in their involvement in the violence.

Street fighting preceded economic crime and became a training ground for violent behavior including the use of weapons and their procurement along with the survival skills necessary in street fighting. Prior to involvement in economic crime, many adolescents had already been steeled to violence with the deaths of companions. Although street fighting occasionally involved disputes over property, they were primarily involved in the status of the gang and control of gang territory or turf. Street fighting then became the gangmember's school for the ensuing economic criminal activity. This street fighting also provided a socialization into illegal behavior which grew into more violence and economic crime.

#### **Economic Influences in Gang Membership**

Thrasher (1928) identified thrill as one of the factors in adolescent crime. More than sixty years later, Sullivan (1989) also identified the thrill or search for excitement along with the need to attain status in the peer group as a factor in adolescent street crime. Income does not appear to be a factor in early economic crime, and most of the interviewed adolescents depended on their families for support. Even the more affluent adolescents who had access to part-time work did not usually seek employment. Many of the adolescents also viewed economic crime as recreation or an alternative to doing nothing. As the adolescents became

older, crime developed into a means to an income without legitimate work. Theft provided both recreation and a means to acquire personal items which the gang members were unable to get from their families.

Both the ecology of the neighborhood and the available local markets for illegal goods and services influenced the crime in the areas. The locations of vacant lots, burned out buildings, businesses and shopping centers all contribute to the adolescent crime rate. If the neighborhood is isolated from the municipal government and services, the neighborhood dwellers are unable to use the police protection for control. The availability of local markets and fences for stolen merchandise is an important economic factor. Every business needs a market for goods.

#### **Gang Recruitment**

Recruitment in economic crime is influenced by the social organization of criminal operations: patterns of recruitment, vertical and horizontal lines of organization, transmission of skills and the role and management of violence. All adolescents were usually involved in some form of social organization even though it may have been simplistic. The crimes committed by gang members were based on the job skills of the adolescents. Car theft and burglary required manual skills, but drug dealing required more social skills. The willingness to be violent and the ability to use that violence in the commission of a crime were viewed as other job skills.

The sample used by Sullivan (1989) included three different neighborhoods in Brooklyn. These three were black, Puerto Rican and white. Sullivan does not differentiate between the neighborhoods. There is also no explanation as to the selection process used for the study. However, the findings strongly match those determined by Thrasher in 1928, Fagan in 1984 and Block in 1993. Through a time period of 65 years, adolescent street gangs followed the same patterns of searching for thrills, organizing into teaching groups for crime and growing toward more violence. The process of growth from turf fights and status attainment to economic crime instead of legal employment has continued.

#### **Correlation between Gang Crime and Delinquency**

Curry and Spergel (1988) hypothesize that there is a correlation between gang crime and delinquency and that both are influenced by the patterns of social disorganization and poverty within the neighborhoods. Furthermore, they argue that delinquency is associated with poverty and that homicide is associated with social disorganization. Curry and Spergel differentiated between group delinquency and gang delinquency based on the social structure of the groups involved in the gang or group activities. Using "community-level data", "delinquency rate data" and the 1980 census data, they attempted to prove this correlation.

In this study, they based their delinquency rate data on the statistics from the Gang Crime Unit of the Chicago Police Department during the periods of 1978-1981 and 1982-

1985. This Gang Crime Unit focuses on "high profile gangs engaged in the serious, mainly assaultive crime that grows out of gang function or gang-related motivation" (p. 384). Curry and Spergel do not define the term gang-related as either involving known gang members or a crime against another gang. Therefore, their terminology is vague and the statistics of high-profile gangs questionable. The statistics from "community-level data" are never explained as to the source or method of compilation.

In designating the ethnicity of the community for use of ETHNIC variable, Curry and Spergel labeled those with over 70% white residents as "white" and those with over 70% black as "black": However, the authors labeled communities as Hispanic if the Hispanic residents outnumbered either black or white residents. These Hispanics included a total of both Puerto Rican and Mexican residents, who exhibit different social cultures. Based on this relatively small percentage of the population, 6.7%, Curry and Spergel concluded that Hispanic gang members were influenced by social disorganization rather than the poverty which influenced the black gang members.

The conclusions of the study are relevant in their determination of the differences between the Hispanic and Black gang members. Curry and Spergel concluded that poverty is the main influence of the black gangs, while social disorganization is the main influence of the Hispanic gangs.

### **Violence and Drugs**

The purpose of Fagan's (1989) study of urban gangs was to determine a relationship between gang violence and drug involvement within the gangs, and, if the evidence existed that the rates and severity of illegal substance abuse and involvement in drug trafficking was either higher or equal in urban youth who belonged to gangs than those who did not belong. Fagan also sought to study the pattern of individual and collective crime, drug use and drug dealing among gangs by studying gang members in three metropolitan areas. His hypothesis states that there is a relationship among gangs in patterns of drug involvement and other criminal activity which could be determined empirically from samples of gang members in neighborhoods within each city. Furthermore, whether social, organizational and subcultural processes within the gang could be determined from self reports from gang members on gang structure and processes. He also stated that research showed that gang involvement contributed to patterns of violence, while parallel but independent subcultures determined the patterns of this violence. The importance of drug involvement in criminal activity varies in its contribution to other criminal activity and the level of violence of that criminal activity. Therefore, Fagan hypothesized that crime and violence among gangs should occur independently of substance use and that serious drug involvement should occur for those gangs with more formal structures and social processes.

Fagan used a sampling of 151 gang members from Chicago, Los Angeles and Detroit in his study. He limited the sample to males, from 13 to 20 years old, primarily minorities from inner city gangs only. In order to find an appropriate sampling, he relied on intermediaries from neutral social service agencies who worked with gang members in selecting the original groups. These intermediaries also insured that all known neighborhood gangs were included. Using a "snowballing" technique, the original respondents were asked to recommend other gang members to participate. These were interviewed and determined eligible by the intermediaries. Referral from social agencies was also used to find potential respondents. Gang chains, gang members suggesting other gang members to participate, permitted stratification of the sampling since age was a determinant of the respondents. Age is also a factor in the role of the member in the gang structure from the "wannabes" and juniors to the OG's or old gangsters. Fagan stated that the sampling was representative only of the neighborhoods studied and could not be applied in general to all cities or neighborhoods.

Survey items were read aloud to the participants and the neutral intermediaries were available to help in any way necessary. The intermediaries also monitored attendance and the percentage of members from each neighborhood represented. The survey included demographic items, self reported delinquency and drug use/sales measures,

involvement in school or work, family life, gang structure and roles, activities, organization, law enforcement and social agencies. Fagan used reliability analyses for the self reported delinquency index, which ranged from adequate to excellent in all three sites.

Fagan does not define the geographical limits of his neighborhoods as far as the size of the area studied. Since he used only 151 males in a specific age group, the sample does not appear to be adequate for three metropolitan areas. The sample would have been more fitting for one metropolitan area. Using this small sample, generalizability of the results is not possible. Therefore, Fagan's study can only be valid for the specific neighborhoods which he studied. Fagan uses Klein's (1971) definition of street gang to limit the group to adolescents or young adults involved in negative behavior. The use of survey forms with people reading the questions to the participants and the aid of the volunteers eliminated the possibility of illiteracy influencing the survey. One factor Fagan did not approach was gaining the trust of the gang members prior to the survey. The reliability of the truth in self reported delinquency surveys is influenced by the person asking the questions and the individual's role in the gang. Since crime is necessary to hold more power within the gang, an adolescent male may attempt to raise his power factor by lying about the crimes he has committed. The gangs will also attain more power in the neighborhoods if they commit

more crimes. A respondent trying to fit the persona of the tough gang member may exaggerate his answers to the survey, therefore compromising the validity of the survey. Fagan did not specify if the various testing sites and times were the same.

Fagan's conclusions were that there is a relationship between drug involvement and gang acts but that this relationship is similar to drug involvement among urban adolescents who are not official gang members. Drugs also play an important part in the delinquency of gang members. While drug use occurs regardless of other crimes, it is a part of the deviant behavior pattern. Gang membership is influenced by drug use. The use of serious substances was also not indicative of gang violence. Fagan states that violent incidents involving the gangs are usually territorial or status disputes rather than involving drug sales.

#### **Four Types of Gangs**

While he found four significant types of gangs in all of the three cities studied, Fagan states that the majority of urban inner city adolescents do not belong to a gang. Type 1 gangs are involved in few delinquent activities, have low involvement in drug sales and are primarily involved in social activities. Type 2 gangs have a few members involved in nondrug criminal behaviors but a high involvement in drug use and sales and also vandalism. They are classified as a party gang and seem to be affiliated based on supportive

patterns of drug use and dealing. The third gang type includes serious delinquents who have extensive involvement in delinquency, are involved in drug sales and can be classified as serious delinquents. Finally, Type 4 is seriously involved in criminality and drug sales in a systematic relationship with other criminal acts. They are labeled as an organization and Fagan designates this type as at the highest risk for developing into a more formal criminal organization. Therefore, the major contributors to gang violence, the core members, are a majority within a minority. Due to the social isolation in the neighborhoods, the gangs become an economic factor in the neighborhood. The socialization of adolescents then becomes a force of the gang system. The social norms of the gang neighborhood differ from the social norms of other structures. Consequently, the gangs have become a primary social influence among the minority males within this age group. Fagan's explanation for the variation in gang violence is the social and economic isolation of the neighborhoods and the influences of social and legal controls along with economic and criminal opportunities within those areas. However, both the gang members and the neighborhoods reflect the marginalization of the violence.

Although Fagan's study used a minor sample of the gang population scattered through three metropolitan areas, his conclusion that four specific types of gangs can be identified is an important statement. Furthermore, his

recognition of the gang members as a very low percentage of urban youth is significant and contrary to popular belief that the majority of urban minorities are involved in gang activities. Fagan also recognizes the gang as a social and economic factor in the development of isolated neighborhoods.

### **Street Life**

In 1995, Fleisher quoted Fagan, "Gang participation may not be a cause of delinquency but a facilitator of it. In turn the factors that explain the higher rates of delinquency among gang youths may lie in the social organization of gangs and their development in specific social and historic contexts" (Fleisher 1995 p. 112). By studying street people in his ethnographic research, Fleisher discovered that children were being used as pawns in the drug market because their penalties were minor as opposed to the more severe penalties for adults. In 1989 his study determined that 300,000 unsupervised adolescents were living on the streets of the United States (Fleisher 1995). Many of these adolescents gravitated toward others with similar backgrounds and problems. This resulted in a group behavior of street offending since delinquents almost never commit street crimes alone. Fleisher also found the likelihood of an increase in delinquent behavior correlated with an increase in the number of delinquent associates of the adolescent. Therefore, if the adolescent lives on the street without supervision and joins with other juveniles or

gang members, his chances of involvement in criminal activity increase. Fleisher found that in the street criminals he interviewed chronic street criminals choose to be "outlaws" because straight life has too many responsibilities, obligations and pressures. After socialization or learning the ways of the street life and being molded into an effective participant, the alteration of this life style is too difficult for most juveniles. The influence of peers is one of the primary causes of juvenile delinquency along with the characteristics of the neighborhood, the individual personality of the adolescent, differences in temperament and family conditions. Impulsiveness, low self control and social maladjustment are also contributing personality factors to delinquency. As these adolescents band together for support, the group is often assimilated into one of the known street gangs or labeled as a street gang due to their criminal activity.

#### **Rewards of Gang Membership**

Sotomayer (1979) stated that gang violence is a learned behavior based on the rewards of power, esteem, material goods and a strong sense of identity. These rewards are not available often in the poverty ridden, minority inhabited ghettos. The gangs then provide these attributes to willing adolescents. In Monster, the Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member, (1993), Sayika Shakur, aka Monster Kody Scott, corroborates this in his story of his involvement with the Crips which led to his imprisonment in the super maximum

security prison at Pelican Island in California. Shakur stresses the family aspects of the gang and the importance of maintaining the reputation and loyalty of gang members. He also describes his gang involvement as "...my career, my 'calling' as church folks say when someone does one thing really well" (Shakur p. 40).

These gang members who stand out and gain reputation are both feared and respected by other gang members. Shakur lists three stages of gaining "reputation" and becoming an Old Gangster. The first was building the reputation of your name as an individual. Secondly, the gang member must build his reputation within his gang so the two are synonymous. Thirdly, the gang member must become a promoter of the gang to which he belongs. Shakur began the journey to gain his reputation and become an Old Gangster when he was eleven years old.

#### **Movement into Nonurban Areas**

By 1994, the media had extensively publicized the gang violence. The violence that occurred at the intersection of Florence and Normandie after the Rodney King verdict shattered the nation. Surveys from law enforcement agencies have found gangs to be growing into more areas, including nonurban communities (Howell 1994). Howell determined that the movement of gangs into a smaller community appeared to be the result of family migration rather than gang unit relocation. These surveys have also shown that drug trafficking is not specifically an organizational activity

of gangs. However, contrary to Howell's research, the Chicago Tribune reported on December 17, 1995, that Gangster Disciple street gang members were arrested in Springfield, Missouri. Upon investigation, the Springfield Police Department found that the area was viewed as a potential market for crack cocaine and that members of the street gang were reaping a \$50,000 monthly profit from the streets of Springfield. George Knox, Director of the National Gang Crime Research Center at Chicago State University, stated that the Gangster Disciples have taken an aggressive approach to branching out into other cities in order to market drugs and that the center has found evidence of Gangster Disciples in as many as 35 different states. When the center surveyed 107 law enforcement agencies in Georgia, they found that nearly 25% had had contact with the Gangster Disciples in their communities. The Springfield investigation also found that the gang had plans to enroll gang members in Southwest Missouri State University so they could target college students as a potential drug market. As the gang members compared the profits to be made in Chicago to the profits to be made in other areas, Knox compared their plans to expand the gang's drug distribution to McDonald's franchising. On October 2, 1994, the Chicago Tribune staff writer George Papajohn quoted a 1981 memo to gang members from Larry Hoover, imprisoned leader of the Gangster Disciples, and his board of directors as stating, "...through business and politics, we can build an

economical base that will insure us boundless power and wealth'' (Section 1 p. 8).

Nongang adolescents are also involved equally in drug trafficking. The difference between drug dealing as a gang activity and as an individual activity even if that person is a gang member must be delineated (Moore 1993). Between 1983 and 1985, the majority of individuals arrested for drug sales in South Central Los Angeles were not gang members (Moore 1993). Moore also did not find an increase in either violence or the presence of guns in a drug deal more prevalent among gang members dealing cocaine as opposed to nongang members. However, drug trafficking does appear to be an economic factor used by the gangs in order to finance their other ventures such as weapons and ammunition.

### **Causes and Effects of Gangs**

The National Institute of Justice questions whether the gangs are a symptom of community ills or the cause (Conly 1993). Thrasher (1928) described Chicago's gang communities as deteriorating neighborhoods with shifting populations and with the mobility and disorganization of a slum. He theorized that gangs moved in to fill the gaps. The growth of gangs was viewed as resulting from weaknesses in the schools, communities and ethnic organizations. Thrasher also viewed the family as failing to provide opportunity and social control in the transition of males from youth to adulthood. The National Institute of Justice (Conly 1993) lists the following occurrences which foreshadow the

development of a gang neighborhood: loss of business, isolation, job changes, institutional racism, population movement and disorganization due to racial and ethnic changes. Monti (1993) points out that the defensive character of gangs is indicative of an area's organizational and social climate. Economic decline and racial change has an effect on the neighborhoods. The presence of strong community groups such as churches or government agencies determined the organization of changing neighborhoods and their rebuilding of the community. "Creation of gangs was not the result of social disorganization, but the discovery by young persons of a type of voluntary organization that gave them a relatively secure anchor in a community beginning to rediscover itself after 30 years of disruption" (Monti p. 231). The makeup of the community itself determines the formation of gangs. Just as a Jewish neighborhood will not have a Knights of Columbus, a wealthy neighborhood will not have self help groups for the homeless, or Sun City will not have youth gangs. The types of people and their life styles determine the presence or absence of neighborhood gangs. The types of groups people create complement their lives. In St. Louis, Monti (1993) studied the evolution of gangs into the near north suburbs during the 1980s. She found an increasing number of troubled households, growing hostility in the schools toward new black students and the traditional rivalries among the townships. Gangs appeared in various types of communities

both settled and unsettled, problem areas and places with few problems. They appeared to migrate from heavy populations of minority citizens to these suburbs. As the gang control developed, they filled an important role in the social structure of these communities. In the less settled communities or those in transition, Monti found that the gangs were not as stable as those in more settled communities. Changes in the less stable communities involved the number of gangs, their size, territories, names, allegiances, structure and behaviors. Some of these occurred simply as part of the natural growth and development of the gang. Monti also found three factors in gang expansion and growth into new areas. School desegregation encouraged adolescents to join gangs for protection and identity in an unfamiliar environment. Gangs moved to claim specific schools as their turf which resulted in more problems for school administrators. Drug sales necessitated new markets and automobiles provided the mobility necessary to widen the drug territory to increase sales.

### **Gang as a Subculture**

A gang is a subculture with its own set of values and norms to which youths are enculturated and socialized. Vigil (1993) found that socialization is one of the most important forces in the formation and persistence of gangs and gang members. He also determined that street survival depends upon the adolescent's ability to find where he fits

into the hierarchy of dominance and aggression. Gang membership can provide protection if needed. Often gang membership is generational and inherited from other family members. This is more prevalent among the Hispanic gangs. Fleisher (1995) found that the Hispanic culture's rites of passage are family traditions. Sons pass through the same rituals as their fathers. These rites reinforce both the gang's cultural heritage and the violence. The initiation points out the importance of bravery, violence, group membership and honor.

#### **Reasons to Join a Gang**

Just as Thrasher (1928) identified thrill as a reason for joining a gang, Vigil found adventure and freedom to undertake these adventures a factor in gang membership. Adolescents also adopted the values and guidelines of their friends and were absorbed into gangs. Padilla (1993) stated that the gang has its own culture and teaches the youth norms, skills, values, beliefs, and traditions of a larger society. Street socialization is the method used to communicate and reinforce the gang culture. Collectivism provides the ideology of strength and the belief that the capacity to earn a living or improve life can only be realized through a collective front. Padilla quotes Coco, a gang member, who explains "...we are a group, a community, a family--we have to learn to live together. If we separate, we will never have a chance. We need each other even to make sure that we have a spot for selling" (Padilla

p. 179). This collectivism is shaped by family traditions, ethnic solidarity and blood kinship. It also provides a base of local consumers or people who are referred by friends. Individualism according to the gangs places a person in a precarious position. Therefore, this collectivism provides the gang member with a sense of purpose and the ability or driving force to pursue economic and social success. Economically, collectivism provides a safe place to sell drugs, good merchandise resulting in satisfied consumers and higher profits, safety in the numbers of other gang members and protection from police invasion and apprehension. Another advantage of collectivism to the consumer is dealing with a reputable source for drugs or merchandise and the confidence the consumer has in the merchandise.

Junior high is often the first time adolescents have left their neighborhoods and are involved with adolescents from other social structures and values. Gangs then take on a new importance as they join together for support and protection. School becomes an arena for the drama of the gang roles and the power plays. The group name brings pride, identity and focus to the gang. Just as school teams have a collective identity and action, rejected teens create their own teams in gangs. Fleisher (1995) found that gang peers offered safety on the street, in jail or in prison and the opportunities to make money. Conventional work was not perceived as a viable method to gather the material goods

the gang members sought. The gang offered the place to seek employment. "There are some jobs that people can still find, but who wants them? They don't pay. I want a job that can support. I want a job that I could use my talents-speaking, communicating, selling and a definite goal that I'd be working towards as far as money is concerned," related a gang member to Padilla (1993 p. 178). These gang members had no belief in education or conventional jobs leading to a successful, meaningful life. A tension existed between culturally defined goals and the ineffectiveness of socially legitimate means for achieving them. Gangs developed as an income generating business in the unconventional economies which developed within the changing environments and communities.

### **Gang Economy**

Moore (1993) stated that a community must have an economic base for survival, and, if that base does not consist of wages or salaries, then another economy will develop. People must find a way to survive. Therefore, a substitute for the economic base of wages or salaries must develop and this substitute often is welfare, bartering, informal economic arrangements or illegal activities. If a child is reared in this form of economy, he learns this type of economy as the norm. Consequently, as he matures, he then uses these substitute economic bases as a normal part of his life. Research has shown that once this behavior is learned, change to an economy based on wages and legitimate

business practices becomes almost impossible (Fleisher 1995).

### **Gangs in the Schools**

Hutchison and Kile (1993) discerned six consequences of gang activity influencing the quality of school life. Street gangs gained control of the school, certain areas of the school buildings or specific classrooms. If a student did not belong to a gang or did belong to a rival gang, he was not safe on this gang controlled turf. Street gangs also controlled drug trafficking in the schools and actively recruited members in the school, on school grounds or on the way to and from school. While at school, students were often intimidated or physically attacked. Students reported fear of physical assaults in the schools, which often resulted in their dropping out of school. These problems then forced school administrators to give in to the power and intimidation of the street gangs by transferring students to other schools to insure their safety. This creates a cycle of acquiescence and provides the gang with more power.

Just as Thrasher (1928) found most gang violence involved status and turf, Howell (1994) found the same factors involved in his study. The gangs in Thrasher's study used fists and knives as weapons, while the gangs in Howell's study were armed with automatic weapons making the violence more deadly. Howell also stressed the need for

further studies of the gangs in order to document national trends and lead law enforcement.

### **Categories of High Crime Neighborhoods**

Carolyn and Richard Block (1993) in their studies of the Chicago street gangs analyzed the neighborhood and the relationships between the violence, increase of crime over the 25 year period and the gang affiliations of the neighborhoods. This study determined that gang-related, high-crime neighborhoods can be classified into three categories: turf hot spots, drug hot spots and turf/drug hot spots. They also identified a correlation between violence and homicide in more turf-related than drug related problems. Only eight of the 288 gang-related homicides in Chicago between 1987 and 1990 were related to drugs. During this same time, 17,085 offenses were classified as street gang-related. This included 8,828 nonlethal violent offenses such as aggravated and simple assault and battery, 5,888 drug offenses and 2,081 other offenses ranging from liquor law violations to intimidation, mob action, vandalism, robbery and weapons violations (Block & Block 1993). More than forty major street gangs are active in Chicago, but the four major street gangs accounted for 69% of the recorded crime incidents, Latin Kings, Disciples, Latin Disciples and Vice Lords. These four street gangs make up approximately 51% of the gang membership and from 1987 to 1990 were the most criminally active. During this time frame, 17,085 street gang-motivated offenses were

recorded and were divided among these major gangs as follows: Black Gangster Disciples Nation 4,843, Vice Lords 3,116, Latin Kings 2,868 and Latin Disciples 1,011 (Block & Block 1993 p. 3). The remaining 5,207 were attributed to other gangs including newly emerging small street gangs who were primarily Latino. Many of these crimes were involved in disputes over turf.

#### **Origins of the Vice Lord Street Gang**

During 1964 and 1965 Keiser (1969) studied the Vice Lords street gang and its historical development. He was an anthropologist who attempted to understand the workings of the ghetto gang using an ethnographic study. Keiser limited his case study to the Vice Lord Kingdom but stated that the information acquired could be applied to other gangs of similar age and composition operating in other depressed areas of large American cities. The behavior of the gang members in violent and delinquent activities was accepted and encouraged to provide prestige for the Vice Lords. He found that the folklore and mythology surrounding the Vice Lords were difficult to unravel. According to Vice Lord members, in 1958 the gang originated in Harding Cottage, the dormitory housing the toughest boys in the Illinois State Training School for Boys at St. Charles, Illinois. When these boys were released in the fall, they returned to the Lawndale area of Chicago and founded the Vice Lord Kingdom. At this time, the controlling neighborhood gang, the Clovers, were breaking up and the time was appropriate for

another gang to take over. Two versions of the myth begin at this point.

According to the first, the original members of the Vice Lords belonged to the Imperial Chaplains and started their own branch, Imperial Vice Lords. As friction developed, the Imperial Vice Lords won their independence and established themselves as the Conservative Vice Lord Nation.

The second myth says that the Vice Lords created an independent, social club for sponsoring parties and hanging out together. Fighting then developed with the neighboring gangs, Cobras and Imperial Chaplains. The Vice Lords won their independence and reputation as a street gang. Fights with neighborhood gangs and alliances developed the Vice Lords into a strong gang with more members. Since their survival required members and building a reputation, the Vice Lords began a recruitment program based on friendship with prospective members as opposed to the intimidation and threatening tactics used by other gangs. As they gained the friendship of prospective members, these prospective members were labeled as enemies by the rival gangs. Therefore in order to survive he had to have the support of the Vice Lords and stay with them. This method was used to slowly absorb gang members from independents. They also absorbed other gangs by winning fights and by forming alliances. As the Vice Lords absorbed gangs with reputations as fierce

fighters, these new gang members brought prestige to the Vice Lords.

An institutionalization of Vice Lord membership developed as branches formed into a loosely knit federation, branch leadership became organized into specific positions, age categories were set up and duties were assigned to the various branches. In order to provide new leaders when old leaders were imprisoned, a leadership development program was created.

In 1962 according to Keiser (1969) the advent of Black Nationalism changed the profile of the gangs. When a black was murdered in a Polish neighborhood, the former enemies, the Cobras and the Vice Lords, joined forces to make retaliatory raids on the Polish neighborhood. This affiliation quickly dissolved and the two gangs returned to their former enemy status. After 1962, feuding developed in the Vice Lord Nation and new gangs developed in the neighborhood. The jail terms of the original founders ended in 1966, and they returned to the neighborhood. Their ages then ranged from 23 to 26, and they brought new maturity to the former adolescent group. Their return also influenced new members to join. At this time intensive media coverage labeled the Blackstone Rangers as the toughest, best organized gang Chicago had seen for a long time. This media coverage brought a loss in reputation and power to the Vice Lords. After the 1966 Westside riots, the Vice Lords became

disillusioned with Black Nationalism and began to reorganize.

### **Vice Lord Power Structure**

The Vice Lords created a board or administrative body to deal with the matters affecting the entire nation. They instigated regular weekly meetings and required members to register, pay a membership fee and carry an identification card. By 1968, the Club had become legally incorporated and had a formal business office located on 16th Street. A government grant for self help projects provided the sources to create a restaurant, employment service, recreation club and legal services.

According to Fleisher (1995), warfare mobilizes the gang, reinforces and stabilizes its social status and encourages group cohesion. Keiser (1969) found in the Vice Lord organization, the position of war counselor is the president's main assistant when the gang is involved in this warfare. If a Vice Lord is attacked, the president and the war counselor determine whether the gang will retaliate. The decision must be approved by the board, but the war counselor leads the gang and organizes the raid. The values of these warriors depends on their temperament, personality and mental state. A gang leader must have the charisma to convince the rank and file members to follow him. He must also have an ability for violence and aggression in order to control the weaker gang members. Strong verbal skills are required to lead the rituals. There are carefully followed

rituals involved in gangbanging or gang fights. Before the actual fighting begins the Vice Lords meet for the prefight gathering to plan strategy. This phase is the time of drinking, singing, shouting and bragging to emotionally prepare to face the dangers of actual fighting. When criminal activities progress from boasting and victimless crimes to violence, the youthful qualities of play disappear. The confrontation between the enemy clubs follows with the two opposing groups facing each other while the war counselors stand between the gang members and exchange threats and insults. When the rival war counselors actually begin fighting, the fight or the encounter is begun. Postfight gathering is the final phase when the Vice Lords gather in their territory to drink and brag about their exploits. Gang fights are a way of gaining reputation or rep or showing heart. This adds to the prestige of the gang member and the mythology of the gang.

### **Vice Lord Ideology**

Keiser determined the ideology of the Vice Lord organization culture is based upon heart ideology, soul ideology, brotherhood ideology and game ideology. Heart refers to bravery and the way a member reacts during the gang fights. Having heart is a main component of acquiring a reputation in the gang. Soul is stripping away the facade of the person to show real effort and feeling. Singing and dancing in the style of soul becomes part of the ritual of standing on the street corner. Brotherhood ideology is

commemorated in the Tupac Shakur rap song, "Pour a Little Liquor". When Vice Lords gather and drink wine, a small amount is poured out in the letters VL or V in memory of those brothers who are dead or in prison and unable to share the wine. The ability to manipulate others is portrayed in the game ideology. These four ideological sets define Vice Lord reality and are used to judge the behavior of other gang members.

Padilla (1993) noted that organization was needed when the gang businesses grew too large to manage; therefore, gang nations developed. In the 1980s Chicago was divided into two gang nations, Folks and People. The Black Gangster Disciples Nation and the Latin Disciples formed the Folk alliance. The People alliance was then formed by the Latin Kings and Vice Lords. The umbrella label of Folks or People includes the major gangs and their allies.

#### **Gangs and Their Influence on American Culture**

Gansta' Rap music, gang emblems and graffiti have become an influential part of the culture. The gangs use conventional commercial activity such as jackets, T-shirts and school sweaters to show their gang allegiance. In 1980 an Eagles record cover featured the pointed homeboy lettering symbolic of the gangs. MTV, movies geared to adolescents and teen magazines use graffiti as the backdrop for videos and also use gang slang terminology. Teen Angel magazine depicts gang members in their gang uniforms and also allegedly lists hits on gang members. A 1990 album

cover of Kool Moe Dee showed the singer dressed in a blue sweatshirt with BK monograms (Blood Killer) and a jeep with its front wheel on a red handkerchief. British Knight products are viewed as meaning Blood Killer and the red handkerchief under the tire showed more disrespect to the Bloods gang (Hutchison 1993).

### **Hispanic Gangs**

Fleisher (1995) examined the recruiting practices of the Hispanic gangs and discovered that their recruitment was through recognized social ties. The Hispanic culture had rules for transforming Latin born networks into a system of subnetworks of various age groups to develop into gangs. Younger members were expected to develop into the mature leaders of the gangs. Multigenerational connections provided social cohesion and aided in recruiting. In the gang called V-13s, the pee wees became members before they started to elementary school. In elementary school, the gang members were called *Juanitos*, in junior high *Chicos* and in high school *Chucos*. Recruitment was important to the survival of the gang since members were lost to death, prison and simply leaving. Nonmembers are carefully observed and encouraged to become members or affiliates.

### **Gang Folklore**

Fleisher discovered the folklore of gang recruitment was extensive. One reason cited was the fear of aggression that the nonmembers felt they must join a gang or be killed. Often the boys would hang out on the street corners with the

older gang members until they became acquainted and then either formally joined the gang or were slowly but informally absorbed into the gang. The term "courted in" refers to a method of joining the gang by proving heart by fighting two or three of the gang members. In November 1993 Champaign, Illinois (Fleisher 1995) folklore reported that to become a gang member, the initiate had to kill another person, cut off a body part and return the body part to the gang for acceptance as a member. This story along with the reported gang members driving in cars with no head lights, following those cars who flashed lights at them and killing the occupants could not be substantiated by the police department and was added to the folklore of the gangs. Separating folklore from fact is difficult. Although the police departments attempt to diffuse situations and dispel rumors, the folklore continues to grow.

Some gang members told Fleisher (1995) that they joined because if they came out of their house, gang members would attack them and steal their lunch money. At age 13, one gangmember stated that the only thing he believed in was his colors and that he was willing to kill anyone who wore the colors of the opposing gang (Fleisher 1995).

Conly (1993) determined that a gang community is usually isolated and suffers from loss of businesses, changes in employment opportunities, institutional racism, shifting populations and disorganization due to racial or ethnic changes. The loss of a feeling of neighborhood or

community was also a part of the isolation which aids in the creation of a gang community. However, as some communities learn to tolerate the gangs and their control, the gangs flourish and continue to survive. These gang neighborhoods or turf can be recognized by the turf marks (Hutchison 1993). Gangs have adopted symbols which Hutchison labeled Blazon Nouveau and spray painted these marks in the neighborhood. These turf marks also disrespect opposing gangs by placing the symbols of the opposition upside down. Neighborhoods with layers of gang graffiti are usually involved in turf wars as the opposing gangs struggle for control.

### **Gang Organization**

Thrasher (1928), Conly (1993), Short (1968) and Block (1958) all found the structure of the gangs to be organized with leaders or the hard-core gang member or Old Gangsters (O.G.), associates who are not as deeply involved in the activity and the "wannabe" who is infatuated with the gang. The "wannabes" are the middle school or junior high adolescents who are recruited as gang members by the older members. Fagan (1989) found that there are four specific types of gangs identifiable by their style: social gangs, party gangs, serious delinquents and serious drug users. The serious drug users are primarily at risk for becoming formal criminal organizations. The Springfield city police have identified a correlation between the rise of crack cocaine distribution and the increase in violent crime. The

police officers have also identified more known gang members in the Springfield area. However, Fagan and Conly state that more nongang adolescents traffic drugs than gang members. The National Institute of Justice (1993) corroborates this concept with statistics showing most gang related crimes are related to status and turf.

Douglas Clay and Frank Aquila (1994) state the reverse philosophy and spread the message not to overreact. They recommend that the schools stop worrying about gangs and gang signs until criminal activity extensively increases. This is not the finding of most of the researchers in the gang problem.

### CHAPTER 3

#### METHODOLOGY

This field study, conducted in the Spring of 1996, was based on an examination of the four major Chicago street gangs: Black Gangster Disciples Nation, Latin Disciples, Latin Kings and the Vice Lords. Brantley and DiRosa (1994) label the gangs of this size as "supergangs" or those who have grown to resemble organized crime more than simply street gangs. The purpose was to describe and analyze the phenomenon of the street gangs as they developed historically and to study their recruitment methods both within the prison system and the neighborhoods.

#### Research Procedure

The site consisted primarily of the prison setting but also correlated with the events on the streets of Danville, Illinois, as the gangs continued to thrive. The Danville Correctional Center is a high medium security institution built to house 900 inmates but now housing approximately 1700. The inmates have been convicted of all levels of felonies from retail theft to murder. This facility is located on the outskirts of a small, midwest community of approximately 30,000 inhabitants. The location of the town close to major intersecting interstate highways and within 40 miles of a major university provides a location ripe for drug trafficking through the Florida, Memphis, Chicago connection.

Purposeful sampling was utilized by conducting interviews with the four major gang chiefs at Danville Correctional Center. These gang chiefs were identified through the use of the Offender Tracking System and the records of the gang liaison. The object of the project and the reasoning being used was explained in order to enlist the aid of the chiefs in interviewing the gang members. The basic premise of the research and the questionnaire to be used was discussed. The importance of confidentiality and the use of the statistics for research only was stressed. After the interviews with these four, network sampling was continued to increase the number of major gang members interviewed including those inmates who were involved in the control of the Danville factions of the street gangs.

#### **Interview Procedure**

A semi-structured interview was used to gather the data from the individual gang members. In order to eliminate problems with illiteracy, the interviewer read the questions, rephrased the questions if necessary and wrote the answers. Any comments or insightful remarks were noted on the questionnaire. Basic demographics were included, but anonymity was guaranteed. The interview questioned the reasons for dropping out of school, the influence of positive role models, influence of peers, reasons for gang selection and incidents occurring at the time of recruitment.

This writer was not allowed to bring a tape recorder into the facility due to security rules. Consequently, the participants were asked after the interview was completed if this was what they meant to say and thus the information was validated. Any corrections or additions were made before the interview was terminated. The interviews were conducted in the counselor's office in the individual housing units. Most of the participants were from this writer's caseload so rapport and trust already existed. Counselors within the prison have daily informal contact with inmates through office hours, classes taught, supervision of activities and work assignments. Newspapers and gang files were used in triangulation with the research information to study gangs, their recruitment methods and their historical development.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Population

The survey included 69 inmates ranging in age from 19 to 51 with the mean age of 29.1. The mean for each gang was as follows: Latin Disciples 27.1, Cobras 28.3, Vice Lords 27.6, Latin Kings 28.1 and Gangster Disciples 30.0. Dividing the gangs into the two major street divisions of Folks and People, the mean was 28.5 for People and 29.4 for the Folks.

Of the 69 inmates polled, 57 were from Chicago, Illinois. The other twelve were from Racine, Wisconsin; New York City, New York; Champaign, Illinois; Cairo, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; East Saint Louis, Illinois; Rockford, Illinois; Bridgeview, Illinois; Bloomington, Illinois and one from the state of Virginia.

The educational level of the participants ranged from fourth grade to college. Four of the participants had completed less than the ninth grade. Ten had completed the ninth grade, 14 the tenth grade, 15 the eleventh grade, 11 the twelfth grade, and 3 the first year of college. Eleven had associate degrees. Two had baccalaureate degrees. Table 1 shows the breakdown of education completed by individual gangs.

**Table 1. SCHOOL LEVEL COMPLETED**

Grade Completed	Latin Disciples	Cobra	Vice Lords	Latin Kings	Disciples	Misc.	TOTAL	Percent
Less than 9	0	0	0	2	1	1	4	5.7
9th	3	0	3	0	4	0	10	14.4
10th	0	3	2	3	6	0	14	20.0
11th	1	4	3	2	3	2	15	21.0
12th	1	1	2	0	4	3	11	15.9
13th	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	4.3
Community								
College	2	0	2	0	6	1	11	15.9
College	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	2.8
TOTAL	7	9	14	7	26	7	69	

### Reasons for Leaving School

Forty-two of the participants left school prior to completing the twelfth grade. Twelve of these left due to criminal acts or incarceration. One cited his probation officer as recommending that he leave school due to the problems he was causing within the school. The second ranked reason for leaving school was "gangbanging" or serious gang activity. This includes the gang turf problems on the school premises, gang fights and gang created problems both within the school and the neighborhood. Twelve participants listed gangbanging as their reason for leaving school. One said he could not attend school due to "gangbanging" and alleged, "A rival gang wouldn't let me go to school. They used to shoot at me." Five said they quit school for life on the street. Seven were expelled, one for drug use, three for fights and three for gang related activity. Two said they left school due to "drinkin' and druggin'". Two also said that money was the reason they left school, one for drug dealing and the other to find a legitimate job. Single participants cited harassment by other students, a pregnant girl friend and "Just about having freedom to move around and do things" as their reasons for leaving school. Another said he just dropped out without a reason. Twenty-seven of the inmates surveyed completed the twelfth grade.

### **Family Structure**

While most experts consider single parent families as the most prevalent for family problems, of the participants surveyed, 43 were reared in two parent families. Only 22 were reared by single parents - 21 by single mothers and one by a single father. One was reared by grandparents, one by grandmother only, one in foster care and two by the combination of grandmother and mother. Table 2 shows the breakdown by gangs.

### **Positive Role Models**

Participants were asked to name any applicable positive role models. Thirty-nine listed their mothers as a positive role model. Only 20 listed their father. Pastors were cited by eight as positive role models, teachers by 11, grandparents by 11, grandmother by 4, grandfather by 4, gangchief by 8, older brother by 3 and uncle by 4. One described his older brother as "...the toughest guy I ever met in my life. I wanted to be a chief just like him." Counselors, aunt, baby-sitter, and sister were each mentioned by one. Seven stated they had no positive role models. One stated, "I never let anyone get close to me." Another stated that he also had no positive role models and no male relatives providing "love or guidance"; therefore he joined the gang for "love".

**Table 2 FAMILY STRUCTURE**

	Latin Disciples	Cobra	Vice Lords	Latin Kings	Disciples	Misc.	TOTAL	Percent
2 Parents	4	5	8	5	18	3	43	62
Grandmother & Mother	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2.8
Mother	3	4	4	1	6	4	21	30.0
Father	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.4
Grandmother	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.4
Grandparents	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.4
TOTAL	7	9	14	7	26	7		

### Juvenile Criminal Record

Only 18 of the sample had a juvenile record which included detention at a state juvenile facility or the Illinois Youth Commission. Fifteen had spent time ranging from overnight to a few months at the Audy Home in Chicago. Audy Home provides short term incarceration which is often of two weeks duration with the objective of modifying behavior.

### Age Joining the Gang

Of the 69 participants, four joined the gang when they were under the age of nine. (See Table 3.) Two said they were born into the gang and were always gang members. Twenty said they joined between the ages of 9 and 12, twenty-nine between 13 and 15, ten between 16 and 18, two between 19 and 21 and four after age 22.

**Table 3**

#### Age Participants Joined the Gang

Age	Total	Percent
At birth	4	5.7
9-12	20	28.9
13-15	29	42.0
16-18	10	14.4
19-21	2	2.8
Over 22	4	5.7

### Reasons for Selection of a Gang

Thirty-six joined the specific gang due to the neighborhood turf. They lived in the area controlled by the gang they joined. Eleven joined because their friends belonged and eleven joined because family members belonged. Other reasons given were to fit in and for protection from other gangs. One explained, "You git in where you fit in." Another stated he was shot by a rival gang and it only added to his frustration so he joined for protection. One specified that he joined the Gangster Disciples because, "The Gangster name sticks out more. I was into gangster movies." The Vice Lords are based on the Moorish Science beliefs and since his mother was of the Moorish Science belief, another said that he selected the Vice Lords. The Vice Lords also attracted another participant because he said they "...benefit me because I was wild. Disciples not doin' anything positive." One summed up his reason for joining as simply, "They were the baddest ones."

Another stated his family was living in the Robert Taylor Projects in Chicago when he was nine and joined the gang. He said, "If you didn't belong you were a wimp. You had to prove yourself--steal or fight or something. To be left alone you had to be affiliated." Since his mother was a Stone, he too joined the Blackstones. A 26 year old Gangster Disciple had joined the gang at 13 said "You imitate the guys you see. Being accepted as a kid means a whole lot--being accepted in the neighborhood." He was an

active gang member between the age of 13 and 20 and dealt with the gang on the street level. When he was incarcerated in "the big house," he said, "I started seeing this thing I was a part of was negativity. There was a sense of camaraderie on the street. In the pen, I had a chance to think about it. I said, 'Where is the camaraderie? Where was the love?' I felt as though I was being used. Nothing more than tribalism. My broken home was a factor. A father needs to be there to take the child from boy to a man."

### **Recruitment Practices**

Neighborhood "homies" recruited 41 of the sample. School friends recruited ten. Nine stated that they inherited their position in the gang. One stated, "I ain't got no brothers--just little sisters. I just hang with the fellas. I'm Gangster by birth, born to be a Gangster. When you be young, you watch the old guys--and you grow up, too. We all just grew up together. I started as a shorty and just grew up in the hood--a Gangster." Family members recruited seven. None stated that they were recruited at a juvenile facility. Two joined for survival. When a judge sentenced a 17 year old from a juvenile facility to spend the remaining time of his incarceration at a maximum security institution for "programming", the inmate was recruited by a gang member he referred to as his "mentor". In order to survive, he became a gang member. He said, "I would be protected from abuse with the Ambrose. Without them, I wouldn't have made it as a guy--you know." The

mentor taught him how to survive prison and protected him from the sexual demands of predatory inmates. His mentor taught him, "You're either the predator or the prey in the joint."

### **Reasons to Join the Gang**

Peer pressure was involved in many of the reasons for joining the gangs. Twenty-one stated they were just hangin' with the crowd. Keiser (1969) listed this as one method of recruitment used by the Vice Lords. If a non-gang member was always in the company of other gang members, rival gangs assumed that they were part of that gang. Nine others joined because all their friends were in the gang. Six stated because it was "the thing to do at the time". One stated that being "accepted as a kid means a whole lot" so he joined so he would not be the "oddball". Five said that the gangs were making money selling drugs and they wanted the money too. Two claimed that they joined the gang for status and respect. One stated that he received more status with more crime. Two stated that their lives in dysfunctional families pushed them into the gang. Two also stated survival as a reason to join. When he moved into a new neighborhood, one participant said that his house was burglarized three times in one month and he was afraid to go home until after dark. He was forced to join the gang in order to quell the fear and stop the burglaries of the family home. He stated, "Around the neighborhood you moved in with the gang or else. I got tired of them breakin' in

the house. People think a lot of us join to be somebody. Not so. In Humboldt Park, they broke in my house three times in a year. They were waiting out there for me. I couldn't even go home until late at night. I was scared. I joined the gang." Two stated that the positive actions of the gang attracted them. At this time, they said that the gangs were helping kids and cleaning up the neighborhoods. They wanted to be part of this positive movement. One participant said, "Why you call us gangs? We're an organization. We do good!"

Not all gang members viewed the gangs as positive organizations. Some participants were adamant that they had "dropped their flag" or quit the gangs. They painted a picture of gangs that had changed from positive organizations into negative influences. They discussed the influence of drugs, money and violence. One explained, "We had morals then. We just looked out for each other and the neighborhood. It was like a club in the sixties. Then came drugs--dope and makin' all that money. It's all different now. Now it's wild."

Another stated he joined "...before crack came to Bloomington Normal." When he first came to the penitentiary, he was told that "gangs gonna help, but I didn't get any help. I'm still hangin' out with the same guys and I'm still back here with them. Kids think it's cool and it's not. My kids won't join a gang. I'm trying to get out to my son so he won't make the same mistake."

All who alleged that they were no longer affiliated were at least 29 years old. A 32 year old member of the Harrison Supreme Gangsters related, "Things have changed a lot now. When I joined it was to help out. Nowadays everyone wants to be a killer not a thinker. The ones who come to jail is younger every day. They want to be where we have been but they don't know how to think. So they throw their lives away. I saw a lot of things I didn't like. I hung out with Folks and got in fights. I wasn't just a fighter. I was a thinker. Gangs have bad points and good points. Good points--if did correctly, you would never see jail. Gangs taught how to use your head not fists. Things have changed. Back then to get certain spots you had to earn it. To get in--it was strict rules. Now anyone can get in. Sadly to say, gangs control the youths. It was a waste of my being. Being so loyal to what was not loyal to you. Let the chiefs out (of jail) to maintain structure."

#### **Questions Addressed**

##### **How do gangs recruit members?**

Gang members are recruited from the schools and neighborhoods designated as that gang's turf. Some participants in this study stated that they were labeled gang members by simply associating with other gang members. Few gang members made a conscious decision to join the gang. Others stated that they were born into the gangs or inherited the affiliation from their fathers. The Hispanics viewed gang membership as a ritual of manhood and shared the

gang philosophy with their fathers, older brothers and uncles. One member said, "I consider myself a part of a family not a gang. It's a family thing." Another stated that what started as a group of young boys playing little league baseball grew into a street gang. The fringe members or wannabes are tested by old gangsters or O.G.'s with minor crimes to see which ones have leadership potential. These young members can then progress through the ranks to power.

One participant stated that the gang chief was a positive role model in the neighborhood. "I looked up to him. He was the one puttin' all the money in my pocket. My mother was tellin' me all that square stuff. I wanted to get some money--not have to wait. I saw the cats on the corner sellin' all the cocaine. My mother was a good mother. I was just hardheaded and didn't want to listen to what she had to tell me. Vice Lords were gettin' no money. G.D.'s in my neighborhood were gettin' the bucks."

#### **How do gangs increase their power?**

According to the gang leaders, the power of a gang is based on membership, turf and economy. As the gangs increase their number of members or those "on count", the gang adds turf or the areas of the neighborhood controlled by the gang. Gangs add to their turf by infiltrating and destroying other gangs, increasing criminal activity within the disputed area or taking over control of the drug sales. This is cyclical since the addition of turf also adds members as that land is annexed. The gang controlling this

turf is recognized by the gang graffiti or painted symbols showing their control. The gang with the most money or who controls the largest drug market is also the most powerful. The addition of turf and members provides more workers and more customers for the drug market. The three factors of members, turf and money are all intertwined to form the power base for the gangs. Therefore, as each increase, the power of the gang increases.

**What does the gang offer to the potential gang member?**

The gangs offered a positive influence in some neighborhoods by helping the children and making sure they stayed in school. A Vice Lord stated, "The chief said, 'If you need something, come and ask us.' I did and I became a Vice Lord at eleven years old. I wanted to be what my brother was in." The gang offers safety and protection to other gang members. Thrills and power are two elements that have historically been acquired through the structure of the gangs. Vigil (1993) also determined that adventure and freedom to follow these adventures were provided by the gangs to potential members. Adolescents from dysfunctional families were provided with a sense of family and belonging, while the gang chief can also provide what the wannabe views as a positive role model. The gang provides acceptance and friends or camaraderie. Discussing this acceptance, one said, "I was just out there being with the guys--doin' what I had to do. I didn't get attention from my moms. I got it from the guys--the gang. I had a lot of anger for my moms,

but grandma was always in my corner.'" This acceptance included help with problems. A Vice Lord explained, "We all got along. If one had a problem, we all had a problem."

The gang offers a framework for survival and includes a structure of gang laws. In the Brothers of the Struggle or Disciple pledge, the members state, "We, the brothers of the struggle pledging wholeheartedly our Love, Life and Loyalty have embraced the teachings of our Chairman. Our covenant will be to fully adhere to all teachings, laws and policies set forth by our Chairman and Executive Staff" (Appendix D). With this pledge also comes a promise of subordination to the organization, to the Chairman and the governing body. Those who deviate from the rules of the organization understand that they will be "...dealt with in that fashion; an enemy of the people" (Appendix D).

The gang offers potential employment in the network of drug trafficking. One summed it up, "Drugs equal money and power." Gang members are provided the product and the assigned street corner to sell the product. Gang members who show skills in the areas of violence are rewarded and encouraged to be an "Enforcer" or "Executioner" for the gang structure. Therefore the gang maintains a hold on the members by providing employment and protection while the criminal activities eliminate the member from legitimate employment in nongang industries. One participant stated that he left the first money made as a gang member on the

table for his mother. His mother never questioned the source of the money because "Moms needed it for us kids. We needed the money" Therefore he continued selling drugs to help support the family.

The Vice Lord Nation's Universal Laws state that the brothers will provide each other with "safety and security, financial growth and financial security,...more love and unity towards each other,...more self discipline and control,...a better care for your Lord Brothers."

(Almighty, U. E. Amir-EL) This memo ends with, "I came in love, I demonstrated truth, I now leave you in peace, while offering you the freedom, to demonstrate your justice"

(Appendix B).

**At what age are most gang members recruited?**

This field study determined that most participants joined the gangs between the ages of 9 and 15. Twenty joined between the ages of 9 and 12. Twenty-nine joined between the ages of 13 and 15. Ten joined between the ages of 16 and 18. Only two joined between 19 and 21. Four were born into the gang and inherited their membership. Four were over the age of 22 when they joined. (See Table 3 page 48).

**What is the profile of the typical gang member?**

The gang members interviewed in this study originated from major cities and small towns across the United States. While the public perception is that gang members are reared in single parent households, sixty-two percent of the

participants in this study came from two parent families, but only twenty-nine percent named their father as a positive role model. Fifty-six percent named their mother as a positive role model. The range of education was from the fourth grade to graduation from a four year college. Thirty-six or over half left school due to criminal activities, gangbanging or expulsion for disciplinary problems. However, only eighteen admitted to having a juvenile record.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

Since the sample was taken from a population of convicted felons, the sample may not necessarily be representative of the gang members as a whole. The statistics represent a small sampling of gang members who are incarcerated.

The lack of positive male role models appears to be a factor in the growth of the gangs and the recruitment of the gang members from the neighborhoods. Even though over 62% of the participants came from a two parent family, only 20 or 29% named their fathers as positive role models as opposed to the 39 or 56% who named their mothers. Seven stated that they had no positive role models. Approximately 16% of the students found a positive influence in the educational system. Within the school system, the participants mentioned eleven teachers and one counselor as positive role models. Although they legitimately could not drop out of school, four of the participants had less than a ninth grade education and ten left after the ninth grade. This is problematic because two left school after the fourth grade and managed to be overlooked by the school authorities.

Dropouts became prime targets for gang recruitment. The gangs often control specific schools or areas of schools where they recruit members and offer protection. Survival may necessitate gang membership. The "'neutrons'", nongang

members, can be harassed and threatened by the gangs in both the schools and the neighborhoods.

The unemployed, uneducated street teen can receive companionship, money, drugs and power from other gang members. The success, which was unattainable in school, can be found with brothers on the streets. The petty street crimes build into more complex crimes as the gang member gains a higher position in the ranks of the gang. The members prove themselves and show their leadership skills with their exploits. These exploits add to the gang mythology and the members' power. Some participants described the gang as "family", where they received love and helped others.

Gangs add to their power base by adding more members to the gang. Therefore these recruitment practices are essential to maintain power. The gang which controls the largest number of members, the largest area of the neighborhood, the most money and the largest drug market is the most powerful.

One participant told of having problems learning or "just being slow" so he was teased by the others. When he found he could hang out on the streets and get "that power and the drugs", he stopped going to school. He found that he could command respect and control other gang members, therefore, he felt successful. He had not been able to attain any success in the classroom. The gang provided what the school could not provide. One participant stated he

joined the gang because, "It was cool. I wanted to be something. I wanted recognition and respect. My brother was runnin' guys and I wanted to run guys. I needed identity. They give you love." Brantley and DiRosa (1994) support these statements with their research by stating that most youths join gangs to satisfy unfulfilled needs such as structure, nurturing, economic opportunity and a sense of belonging. Excitement was also a need fulfilled by the gangs. Keiser (1969) also found that the Vice Lords helped each other with basic needs such as clothing and food.

Lane (1989) found that failures in the families, schools and the workplace created prime candidates for the gangs and the continued influence of the gangs. The school dropout is unable to find employment due to the lack of education and job skills, so he turns to the gang as a job source. This becomes cyclical as he sells drugs or participates in criminal acts as his source of income thus becoming even more unemployable. If he acquires an arrest record, his chances of employment are most limited. Socialization occurs as the gang member is taught the ways of his social group and he becomes molded into an effective member of his culture. This subculture thrives on violence and crime. Membership in the gang is not a problem, but the criminal activities that define the gang are a problem. After this behavior pattern is established, the gang member accepts it as a way of life. He then falls prey to a lifestyle based on this economy of criminal activity.

The male appears to be most vulnerable to gang recruitment between the ages of nine and fifteen. Forty-nine or 71% of the men interviewed joined the gang between the ages of nine and fifteen. Fleisher (1995) stated that chronic attendance problems at school should be a warning that the child is having family problems or other trauma and is a clear indicator of a child in trouble. Teachers, administrators and school support staff have to be aware of these signs of problems and attempt to remedy the situation. Educators must develop a sensitivity to the personal and family problems of their students. Fleisher (1995) also states that intervention in truancy prior to age 16 could save the child from a life on the streets. However, school staff members and counselors who intercede, advocate and advise truants are being eliminated with downsizing and budget cuts. Class size is increasing as staff cuts are made, and teachers are required to add to their already overcrowded schedules.

There is no specific profile of a gang member. The participants of this field study were from both urban and rural areas across the United States. The majority were reared in two parent homes and ranged in education from the fourth grade to college. However, over half left school due to criminal activities, gangbanging or expulsion for disciplinary problems. Only eighteen admitted to having a juvenile record.

The spread of street gangs outside the metropolitan areas and into the suburbs has created problems for the communities. Community leaders, law enforcement agencies, school staff and parents must be aware of the problems and the signs of gang membership and recruitment. It is important for parents, teachers and community leaders to be aware of a possible correlation between the increase of drug trafficking, violent crimes and gang activity. With the loss of businesses and a depressed economy, the smaller towns become target areas for gang recruitment. Researchers have identified this economic factor as an element historically in the growth of street gangs within a community (Conly, 1993).

Any solution for the gang problem facing communities must involve families, schools and community agencies working together in an organized manner. Early intervention is imperative in order to stop the youth from joining gangs. Children in abusive families must be helped. Inadequate parenting is one issue at the core of the problem. The cycle of continued abuse and neglect must be changed. Early modification of behavior problems may be necessary for the child's success. Resources such as parenting skills classes and support groups need to be available and utilized. In some cases, children may even have to be removed from the environment. Monti (1993) determined the increasing number of "troubled households" as a factor in the growth of gangs into the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri. Fleisher

(1995) found that these abused children had higher levels of aggression, fought more with family members, and demonstrated more aggression in the schools toward other children and adults. These children then are labeled disruptive and gain more attention albeit negative attention. When these disruptive children are not in the classroom, the teachers are often happy with their absence.

The Associated Press (1996) reported that in 1993, Warner Birts, the principal of Englewood High School in Chicago, Illinois, hired "reformed members" of the Gangster Disciple street gang to patrol the halls of the high school, help raise test scores, increase attendance and control dropouts. These hall monitors initially helped control or eliminate weapons and lessen assaults in the school. However, in 1995, reports of these hall monitors beating the students to punish them began filtering out of the school. Although Birts had tried a creative method of dealing with the gangs by hiring these hall monitors, their behavior resulted in his dismissal from his position in the high school. School board members fired him based on Englewood High's scholastic failures.

Larry Hoover, leader of the Gangster Disciples, states he is the chairman of an organization known as Growth and Development, which is based on education, political and social development (Papajohn 1994). The gangs have used these methods of becoming a political organization to be recognized. Communities have to recognize the power and

votes available from the gangs. The gangs have gained enough power and control to become a major political organization to be considered in decision making.

Teachers and administrators need to be trained to recognize the signs of gang control in the schools. They should recognize the marks of graffiti, signifying with the use of clothing and hand signs and gang terminology. Fleisher (1995) found that children who are rejected by both peers and teachers recognize themselves as unpopular and disliked and then become prey for the gang recruiters. Teachers must take care not to reject the students because of their problems. Low self esteem is also a factor in joining the gang. These rejected students with low self esteem band together for support. Thus another gang set is created. The school system cannot allow the school buildings and grounds to be controlled by the gangs rather than the staff.

Communities are moving from denial of gang existence and gang problems in their areas to recognition of the problems. Johnson, Webster and Connors (1995) found that communities must control the terror and violence of gangs before they can become revitalized, strengthen families, improve the schools or succeed in interventions of gang problems. They found that 80% of the prosecutors polled were acknowledging that they had gangs in their communities. These prosecutors admitted that the gangs had become widespread with an increase in gang-related violence. Drugs

had also become the major problem in dealing with gang crime. This survey determined that urban gangs have more ready access to powerful weapons and are more prone to violence. One of the major problems in prosecuting gang crimes is the intimidation and threats to the victims and witnesses. This results in difficulty prosecuting the cases. Witness and victim protection programs have been instituted in communities to help deal with the prosecution of gang crime.

Whatever definition of a gang you use, the street gangs have invaded the neighborhoods of both cities and small communities. The street gangs must be recognized as a powerful social structure which greatly influences the youth. This problem must be addressed by families, schools and communities in a coordinated manner. Gangs cannot be ignored or their existence denied. Gangs must either be changed to a positive influence or a substitute found for the needs which they fulfill.

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**Appendix A**  
**Questionnaire**

73

QUESTIONNAIRE

Gang\_\_\_\_\_

Age\_\_\_\_\_Race\_\_\_\_\_

City or town where you grew up\_\_\_\_\_

Education (highest level completed) 9 10 11 12

Vocational Community College College Degree

If you did not complete 12th grade, why did you leave school?

---

Family Structure: 2 Parents

Single parent

Extended family

Foster care

Other family members-

grandparents,aunt/uncle

Juvenile facility

Juvenile record: Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

People who influenced you-(Positive role models)

Mother\_\_\_ Father\_\_\_Teacher\_\_\_Grandparents\_\_\_Gang Chief\_\_\_

Others\_\_\_\_\_

How old were when you joined the gang? 9-12\_\_\_ 13-15\_\_\_

16-18\_\_\_ 19-21\_\_\_ Over 22\_\_\_

How were you recruited? (Circle one or all that pertain)

Family member

Inherited

School Friends

Neighborhood Homies

Juvenile Facilities

Others \_\_\_\_\_

What was occurring in your life when you joined the  
gang? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you join this specific gang?

Neighborhood turf \_\_\_\_\_

Friends belonged \_\_\_\_\_

Family members belonged \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B****Copy of Memo from Brothers of the Struggle**

This memo from the Co-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Brothers of the Struggle or the Disciple Organization is of poor quality due to the underground copying and surreptitious distribution of the memo.

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Date: October 1, 1961

From: The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Board of Directors

To: All Brothers of the Struggle

The Chairman and the Board of Directors wish to extend our love, life and Loyalty to all the Brothers of the Struggle! We are pleased with the support and the participation of many of you that has helped us in making a transition from the Old to the New.

Many of you have a copy of the Organization's Preface. The Preface explains the New Concept and the direction that the Organization has taken. As we stated in the Preface, "In the process of going from the Old to the New, we will have a few complications". As predicted, we have had our share of complications, but we refuse to allow anyone or anything to stagnate our progress or expansion. In spite of the few complications, we are happy to report that we have been making progress. In order for us as an Organization to continue to progress and expand, we must become more educated, politically motivated and aware of the economical realities of Black America.

Laws and Sentences have become more stiffer and longer and more prisons are being built with us in mind. We as an Organization of young Black Men cannot allow ourselves to stay confined behind walls and locked in cages to slowly grow old and useless. Through Business and Politics, we can build an economical base that will insure us boundless power and wealth. But if we stay uneducated and without political power, prisons and death will continue to be a way of life for many of us.

Now is the time for us to put down the Donald Goins books. It is time for us to pick up the business, law, political and economical books. It is time for us to go to school, learn trades and develop all of our talents and skills, so that we will become stronger in society. We cannot wait for the system to teach us, we must take it upon ourselves to learn all that we can about this world. We must not be afraid to change or grow. We, as an Organization will not stand still and die.

All Brothers are to have a copy of the Preface and the Laws of the Organization, these papers are to be kept at all times, they are for you to study and learn. These papers are important and should be treated as such. From time to time, you will be requested to attend and participate in meetings to read and discuss all documents that has been issued to the membership. It is important that you as a member of this Organization, know exactly what the Organization is about and where it is going.

Many of us are unassigned, it is important that all of us have assignments. We need to be everywhere, capitalizing on the learning experience and the profits that each assignment has to offer. It is better to get your hands dirty by work to eat, than to have clean hands and starve. Those of you that has assignments must go to work and perform your duties and tasks to the best of your abilities, so that you will establish a good work record and be more suited for promotion and in a better position to profit.

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Page Two

Date: 10/1/81

Everyone will be required to fill out an application. The reason for the application is for the Chairman and his Board of Directors to know more about you and help place you in a program or assignment that will best suit you as an individual and as a member of this organization.

Some of our brothers have been indicted for murder. We are to give these Brothers all of our support. We encourage you to help in any way that you can. If they are found guilty, they will face the electric chair. We as an organization, will do all that we can to see that they are free.

Many of the laws that govern our organization are still being disregarded and disrespected. All laws are to be adhered too and respected. Those that continue to disregard and disrespect the laws of this organization will be violated and eradicated (removed) from this organization.

Again, thanks for your cooperation and your participation.

Plenty Love

**APPENDIX C**

Copy of a letter from the Almighty, U. E. Amir-EL, a leader of the Almighty Vice Lord Nation and a portion of Vice Lord laws.



Greeting My Beloved Vice Lord Brothers. Lah Via Va Vg; I Come as I am and am as I Come, as a Almighty Vice Lord..... Beloved Brothers, The following are the five (5) Major Principles known to the Human Being Families, and they are the base to which V/Ls function under; They are..... Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice!!!! However; Additional to these five principles, here are Five (5) Major Questions of awakening and growth, for a better awareness of self as a V/L, and those lords around you. These questions are to improve our condition as V/Ls, and to offer a better understanding, and possibly create more productive ideas to assist (US Lords) back on, and down the Golden Path of being true Productive Vice Lords. So brothers, answer the following questions of growth if you're seeking for betterment, you don't have to if you don't want to, it's your Almighty Choice. But for you who do answer and are seeking for a better improvement, I U.E. Amir-EL, will personally hold a get together (Of Growth), and I will share with you brothers the Golden Knowledge that I have been blessed with, and I will be open to learn from you brothers as well. The Five (5) Questions are as followed..... (Almighty!)

- (1)- Why you became a Vice Lord?????
- (2)- What good could you do for Vice Lord?????
- (3)- What have you gain as being a Vice Lord?????
- (4)- What do you think our Beloved Supreme Elites created our V/L Nation for?????
- (5)- If you were the Supreme Chief of our Beloved Nation; What would be the three main things you would do (Now) to improve and better our Nation?????

I came in (Love),  
I demonstrated (Truth),  
I now leave you in (Peace),  
While offering you the (Freedom),  
To demonstrate your Belove (Justice!)

Almighty, U.E. Amir-EL

Date: Jan. 28/94  
Subject: Vice Lord Growth and Improvement:

Salutation My Beloved Brothers,

In the name of this Almighty V/L Nation, I now greet you in the master signs of (Lah Via Va Va;) I come to you in Love, and will demonstrate Truth, by extending my Peace, leaving you Freedom to exercise your Justice (Fairness) while I exercise mine's as a for-real & Firm Vice Lord.

To start this demo off, I would like to say to you all at this time that a well informed Nation, is a well Productive Nation, (If it's done in just means)....I will be clear & to the point; However, any-lord on this location have the Almighty Right to come to me for more Clearification on either one of these subjects I am about to speak on. The subjects are as followed:

(1)- Safety & Security, (2)- Financial Growth & Financial Security on the Nation Boxies, (3)- Learning your V/L Laws "Literature", (4)- Disrespect, (5)-"Committee"Grievance for V/Ls over here in B-East, (6)- Chain of Command, (7)- Showing More Love & Unity towards each other, (8)- Showing more Self Discipline & Control, (9)- Showing a better care for your Lord Brothers.

Brothers, Vice Lord is an Organization, and each member must be Organized with self discipline & control as a V/L. Each Representative have Priorities and they are expected to Govern them-Selves as V/Ls. And if they are assigned to a duty, they must Govern their Station by V/L Laws (Fairly & Equally) Towards each & every V/L. Law Governs all events, and Vice Lord Laws are your Sword & your Shield, Which means it can be Sweet for you or Bitter towards you, it all depends on how you conduct yourself under Nation's Laws. Law have no Friends Nor, Enemies. No one Branch have the power to over rule our nation laws. Vice Lord's Universal Laws Govern's the Nation's Whole, all the (Sub-divisions) of this Mighty Nation; Which is what I base the following B-East Cellhouse V/L Laws & Guide lines under. They are as followed.....

(1)- Safety & Security, (Must & Will) bestood on firmly in this Cellhouse. Each and every V/L over here must be security aware for yourself and every Vice Lord around you, we all are on Security 24/7 at all times. And at least three Brothers must be ready with (A Ones) in & about the cellhouse daily; and the call of code red is (Lah Via) which means to over come your opposers by all means Necessary. Further security instructions will come from the Cellhouse Chief of Security.

(2)- Financial Security, Must be better (Established & Managed.) The Boxies are Very Poor; (But not for long.) They're plans to improve our Financial situation, and no more will this cellhouse be in this type of condition financially as long as this establishment is in Charge. The Nation's Boxies will not be mis-handled, it will shine and serve the purpose our great leaders established them for. There will be no more times when brothers come in on the new and can't get some type of assistance from the Nation's Box, there will be no more Lockdowns and brothers can't get something to carry them through the Dead-lock. These days are over my brothers This I promise.

(3)- Learning your laws "Literature" is a must. There will be Literature Classes for (Both Representatives & Elites) Starting immediately. Because you must know the laws in order to follow the Nation's 'Laws (Especially Elites!)

(4)- Disrespecting Other V/Ls with name calling, Back Biting a brother because of your personal feeling. This type of disrespect will no longer be tolerated over here in B-East. Keep your personal (Misery to yourself) and don't spread your (Evil-Seeds) To other lords; Because if said Evilness is revealed, Consequences will prevail; Under the V/L Laws of Disrespect (Code of Conduct) 8-Principles (#No. 8) Lies & Vices, and under the Tenth Symbol of our Nation's Flag, Gloves (Purity) Causing Division and Negative Feelings Among the People.



Part 2.  
Of Nation's Laws:



- (5)- Grievance; There will be a (3-Man) Vice Lord Grievance Committee here in this cellhouse. These Three Brothers will be of three different (Branches,) and one will be a U.E. Elite, One would be a Branch Elite, and the third will be a Representative Brother; One Man, One Vote, and the majority Rule. There will be no big I's or Lil U's on said committee. The committee is established to hear V/Ls grievances (Only Written Grievances) No one should try and approach or bring forth a grisanee issue by mouth, until the issue have been placed on paper and those involved are all present or you are asked by a committee representative your side of the issue. If you come forth with a grievance issue with-out going through the proper procedures, this act will be consider breaking the Chain of Command.
- (6)- Chain of Command; The Chain of Command should not be broken. All issues should be taken to your gallery L.T. First, and if your gallery L.T. is not around, take the issue to another gallery L.T. that's assigned to another gallery, and if all gallery L.T.'s are out of the cellhouse, take your issue to the Minister of Command. However, if your issue concerns Nation's Laws, take your issue or question, the Minister of Literature; But bring all security matters to your gallery L.T.'s or Minister of Command. The Chain of Command should not be Broken. Study your Code of Conduct; Because if one goes to an elite, when there is not an emergency occurance, or take cellhouse business out of the cellhouse, and this fact is revealed & proven. That lord will be in immediately Violation, and the Visa will be carried out swiftly. However, In case of an (Emergency) any-lord are allowed to take such issue at hand swiftly to anyone in charge or to any elite around, including U.E.s that's not in the cellhouse. But again, not no common issue. All Lords have the right to freely express their feeling & ideas concerning any grievance issues against any-one (No exception.) But it must be on paper. And keep in mind that all grievances will result in some type of Visa; Either on the Violator, or on the brother who wrote the grievance if it's proven that he is lying on a brother, (Playing the catch up games;) In-Short; My Beloved Brothers, the time have come to an end for these lower-self catch up games against other lords. I(U.E.Amir-EL) will not put up with theBack Biting in this cellhouse "Period" nor will any other Staff Representative; so brothers control yourselves and function as V/Ls suppose to, and not with these lowerself games against each other, Stop It!
- (7)- Self Discipline & Control; Lords you must conduct yourselves in the highest signs of respect for yourself, others, and towards your Lord Brothers. And it's this Cellhouse Staff who is responsible for making sure each lord are treated fairly and if they are short to going home, making sure they go home safely. So we will not allow any form of disrespect coming from a lord nor, should any lord accept disrespect from any-one,.... Brothers, with the strength of Lions and the Will of Ants we will move this Nation in B-East forward for a better tomorrow for every Vice Lord over here. Love & Unity will be our strength towards each other, I love all of you, and will be here for each of you in your time of need; but I will not go against law for either of you. My Justice & Mercy are (Equal) and I exercise them both to the fullest. So be aware of your conduct, because if you get yourself caught, don't look for me to be your (rap partner) for law governs all events with me..... I came to you in (Love), I demonstrated (Truth), now I leave you in (Peace), offerring you (Freedom) to unfold your (Justice-Fairness) to yourself and to the rest of your Beloved Vice Lord Brothers under V/L Laws: For Law Governes All.

**APPENDIX D**

Copy of the Preface, organizational structure, pledge  
and creed of the Brothers of the Struggle.

B.O.S.

PLEDGE - CREED

THE PLEDGE - WE

we, the brothers of the struggle pledging wholeheartedly our Love, Life and Loyalty have embraced the teachings of our Chairman. Our covenant will be to fully adhere to all teachings, laws and policies set forth by our Chairman and Executive Staff. The doctrines of our new concept will be a guiding light that shall forever be lit in our hearts and in our minds. This light will serve as a constant reminder and motivating force within each of us. Also it will instill in us dedication, determination and discipline.

THE PLEDGE - "I"

I agree to as long as I stand proudly under the blue sky to serve this glorious organization in it's every cause; and aid and assist my fellow brothers of the struggle in all righteous endeavors. I will do all that I can in helping us both to reach our fullest potential. As the organization grows, I know that I too will grow. For our goals are so inter-related. Positive organizations produce Positive Productive People; that which we are. My every Action, Behavior and Attitude will vividly reflect the positive dignified principles that the organization is built upon. I will never do anything that would cause embarrassment or degradation to the integrity of our glorious organization.

Standing strongly upon our six-points, I shall utilize Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding as I strive in our struggle for Educational, Economical, Political and Social development. I will learn, Look and Listen to anything that may be conducive to the excelleration of our organization. I will strive tirelessly everyday to remain an outstanding member and never abandon our struggle.

As in all struggles, I realize that sacrifices must be made. I will not be selfish; but for the sake of the preservation of our organization I'll be willing to endure my share.

I believe in the goals of our organization. and it's an honor to aid and assist in our struggle for success. I will contribute all I know how and work hard in any capacity that I may or can serve in toward the betterment of our organization. We are a power to be reckon with. The wealth and social status of the world rightfully belongs to a special group of people of our integrity.

We are endowed with a great leader. Together, we shall see and share in his visions. May his visions become our visions, for his visions are for us to grow into a Productive and Successful group of people. With the consolidated and diligent efforts of everyone, our vision shall be manifested into a Reality. Sincere support forever

to our struggles and all Praise and Respect due to our  
Honorable Chairman.

\*THE CREED

WE BELIEVE;

\*IN THE TEACHINGS OF OUR HONORABLE CHAIRMAN;

\*IN ALL LAWS AND POLICIES SET FORTH BY OUR CHAIRMAN AND  
EXECUTIVE STAFF;

\*IN THE CONCEPT AND IDEOLOGY OF ORGANIZATION

\*IN AID AND ASSISTING OUR FELLOW BROTHERS OF THE STRUGGLE IN  
ALL RIGHTEOUS ENDEAVORS

\*IN STANDING STRONGLY UPON OUR SIX-POINTS, UTILIZING  
KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING AS WE STRIVE IN OUR  
STRUGGLE FOR EDUCATIONAL, ECONOMICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT;  
\*THAT WE ARE A SPECIAL GROUP OF PEOPLE; WITH INTEGRITY AND  
DIGNITY:

\*IN THE VISION OF OUR GREAT LEADER; AND THROUGH HIS VISION  
WE CAN BECOME A RECKONING POWER OF PEOPLE BEYOND BONDARIES  
WITHOUT MEASURE.....

THE GOVERNING BODY 9/12/84

### Organizational Structure

1. When it comes to the organization; the individual is subordinate to the organization.
2. The minority is subordinate to the majority.

3. The entire membership is subordinate to the Chairman and governing body. Whoever violates these articles of organizational structure; will be charged with disrupting organizational unity and dealt with in that fashion; an enemy of the people.

We have witness what come from lack of unity and discipline. Now, observe what comes from unity and discipline.

If we are to become a power to reckon with. We must take on the concept of organization. Everyone must do their share. Everybody has a responsibility. For we make up the organization as individuals who have come together as a collective.

Your Struggle