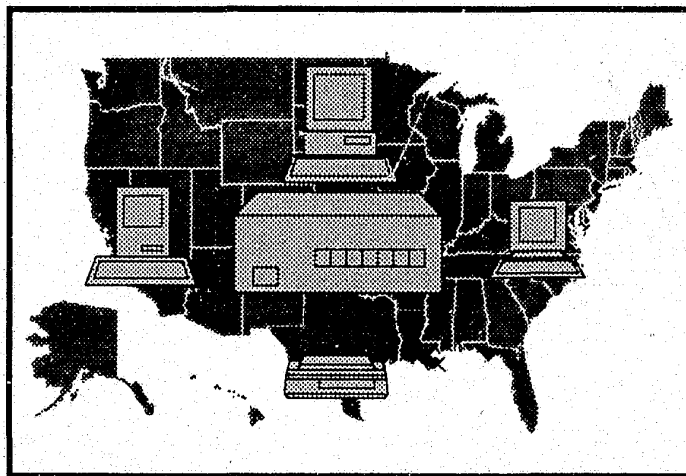


**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF  
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
ANTI-GANG INFORMATION  
RESOURCES**

**FINAL REPORT**



**West Virginia University  
National Assessment Survey**

147399

**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**  
**ANTI-GANG INFORMATION RESOURCES**  
**DRAFT 1992 FINAL REPORT**

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT  
ANTI-GANG INFORMATION RESOURCES  
DRAFT 1992 FINAL REPORT

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This survey of police departments in the largest 79 U.S. cities indicates that perception of the presence of gang and gang-like problems is widespread. 91.1% (72) of the departments report the presence of gangs involving youth and engaging in criminal activity within their jurisdictions. Three more departments (Baltimore (MD), Raleigh (NC), and Washington (DC)) report no gang problem but do report the presence of groups including youth and involved in criminal activity for which they use some other label -- specifically drug organization, posse, or crew. Only four of the largest U.S. cities (Memphis (TN), Newark (NJ), Pittsburgh (PA), and Richmond (VA)) report no gang or gang-like problems.

Comparisons of 1992 data with previous studies of the national level gang problem reveal statistically significant increases in the number of city police departments reporting gang problems over time. In 1975, Miller studied 12 large cities and found six to have gang problems and six to not have gang problems. In 1992, police departments in 10 of the 12 report gang problems, and in the other two -- Baltimore (MD) and Washington (DC) -- a drug organization problem and a crew problem are reported respectively. When we compare Miller's (1982) data on gang problems by city with our 1992 data, we find that the increase in the reported presence of gang problems by city size is statistically significant. Though including Needle and Stapleton's (1983) cities was not part of our research design, for the 44 cities that are included in both studies, we find that the increase in the reported presence of gang problems from 50% to 90.9% is statistically significant. We did include the 35 cities

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from Spergel and Curry's (1990, 1992) 1987 data in our survey that are not among our population of 79 largest cities. Since 29 of the largest cities were not included by Spergel and Curry, we are able to compare the change in the reported presence of gang problems for 85 cities between 1987 and 1992. The increase in the number reporting the presence of gang problems from 72.9% in 1987 to 90.6% in 1992 is statistically significant. This increase in the number of cities where police departments report gang problems and the greater geographic distribution of such reported problems are indicative of the need for accurate and reliable information on the nature and extent of gang problems.

An examination of how information is maintained and reported reveals major needs for technical assistance in information system management by local police departments, if an accurate assessment of the national-level gang problem is to ever be attained. All 72 cities with gang problems report maintaining records on their gang problem, either manually (16.7%) or with the assistance of computers (83.3%). Though records are reportedly maintained, a majority of the largest city police departments are unable to generate the kinds of annual summary statistics needed to assess the level of gang problems in their jurisdictions. Only 27 (37.5%) of the 72 largest U.S. cities with gang problems are able to produce annual tabulations of the number of gangs, the number of gang members, and the number of gang-related crimes for their jurisdictions. Another 12 (16.7%) report numbers of gangs, members, and gang-related homicides. The capacity to report numbers of gangs and members, but not incidents, is found in 26 (36.1%) of the departments.

Two concerns emerge from this finding. First, many police departments report a need for technical assistance to support their information systems. Police departments without

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computerized systems often express the feeling that computerized systems are what they need. Police departments with computerized systems often express a need for technical assistance in generating annual statistics with their particular systems. Our second concern is that there appears to be an emphasis in a majority of large cities reporting gang problems on counting gangs and gang members instead of gang-related crimes. We feel that gang-related crimes should be the statistic that is given the greatest emphasis in any program of technical assistance and is a necessary focus for establishing national-level policies for dealing with local gang problems.

A result of this focus on numbers of gangs and gang members is an imbalance in the statistics that are available. For example, in 23 of the 26 cities that report both numbers of gang members and numbers of gang incidents (in addition to gang homicides), there are more gang members reported than gang incidents. (For all cities, we phrased our request for the number of gang-related incidents in terms that restricted incidents to criminal acts.) The Los Angeles Police Department reports 503 gangs and 55,258 gang members yet only 8,528 gang-related crimes in 1991. The Chicago Police Department reports that 29,000 gang members in 41 gangs account for only 4,765 gang incidents in 1991. The Louisville Police Department reports 250 gang members in 10 gangs and only one gang-related incident (an assault) in 1991. Only three large city police departments report more gang-related incidents than gang members -- Denver (5,100 members, 6,109 incidents), Seattle (800 members, 1,083 incidents), and Tucson (1,377 members, 2,607 incidents).

As was the case for all prior national-level studies of gang problems, we find considerable variation in the ways that police departments state how they identify what

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constitutes a gang in their respective jurisdictions. Using the six criteria for identifying gangs proposed by Needle and Stapleton (1983) using Miller's definition, we find that the percentage of police departments reporting gang problems in our survey who share all six of the criteria (35.7% or 25 departments) is greater than the percentage of departments using all six criteria at the time of the Needle and Stapleton study (14.8%). Still, we find that differences in the utilization of other criteria within these 25 departments sharing the six criteria varies considerably. Whether police departments vary as much as it appears in their actual identification of what a gang is or whether the variation can be attributed simply to variations in the wording of official policy definitions is impossible to resolve with the available information.

Given variations in the quality of gang information that we have noted for the 72 largest cities with reported gang problems, caution is required in reporting national-level statistics on the gang problem. For the largest 79 U.S. cities, local law enforcement agencies maintained records for 1991 on at least 3,876 gangs, 202,981 gang members, and 36,265 gang incidents. These statistics do not include data our survey obtained from selected county jurisdictions and selected city jurisdictions under 200,000 in population. In addition to the total numbers of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents reported from large cities, we obtained selected data from 11 county jurisdictions and 29 police departments from cities with populations under 195,000. One of the county jurisdictions is Los Angeles County. We follow the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office (Reiner 1992) estimation that there is a 25% overlap of LA County gang member files that are also included in Los Angeles Police Department records by reducing the number of Los Angeles County gang members by

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one-fourth. With this adjustment, we find that these jurisdictions maintain records on an additional 1,099 gangs, 49,589 gang members, and 10,094 gang-related incidents. Hence, our conservative estimate of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents as reflected by local police department records for 1991 is 4,881 gangs, 249,724 gang members, and 46,359 gang incidents. These statistics are significantly larger than estimates from any prior study and indicate the need for obtaining even better estimates of the dimensions of the U.S. gang problem.

The inability to produce quantitative measures of the dimensions of the gang problem in particular jurisdictions also carries over into efforts to assess the gang problem in social demographic terms. Only eight (11.1%) of the 71 cities maintaining information on gang members provide annual breakdowns of gang-related incidents by adult and juvenile offenders. Across these eight cities, the number of offenses attributed to adults as compared to juveniles diverges greatly and may be associated with the age of the gang problem itself. For example, in Arlington (TX) and Mobile (AL) with relatively recent gang problems, 90% of gang-related crimes are attributed to juveniles. In Chicago (IL) with its decades-old gang problem, 74% of gang-related incidents are attributed to adults.

Distributions of local gang problems by gender, race, and ethnicity may be as much a result of policy decisions in classification and records-keeping as a result of empirical conditions. Of the largest U.S. cities with gang problems, 23 (31.9%) do not maintain records on female gang members. Nine more report no female gang members. A total of 7,205 female gang members are reported across 40 cities. Twenty-seven cities report a total of 83 independent female gangs. In two large cities with relatively old gang crime problems, New



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York City and Philadelphia, policy decisions have been made to classify only gang crimes in the cities' oriental communities as official "gang" problems that are the concern of the departments' specialized gang crime units. As with cities that officially do not identify females as gang members, this is another instance where policy dictates social demographic statistics on gang members. Thirty-four police departments report keeping data on the race and ethnicity of gang members, but only twenty-four can produce annual statistics by race and ethnicity. Of these only nine provide statistics for both 1990 and 1991. Though whites constitute the smallest category in comparison to African-Americans, Latinos, and Asians, the data from these cities reporting both years shows the number of white gang members growing by 61.7%, the greatest percentage increase of the four major race and ethnic classifications. Newer immigrant groups that appear in the reported data include Filipinos (46.1% of Honolulu's reported gang member population), Jamaicans, Haitians, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Columbians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, Hmong, Samoans, Tongans, Japanese, and Koreans. Since researchers and practitioners have argued that the dynamics of gang development and criminality vary across the cultural boundaries associated with race and ethnicity, policy makers must decide what kinds of social demographic information is most needed for developing nationally coordinated responses to gang crime problems.

Of police departments in the 72 largest U.S. cities with reported gang problems, 53 (73.6%) report having established a specialized unit for dealing with gang-related crime problems. These units range in size from one-officer units in Virginia Beach (VA) and Mesa (AZ) to the 200-officer Los Angeles Police Department CRASH unit and the 432-officer Chicago Police Department Gang Crimes Section. Over half of the gang units providing

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information to this survey report a date of establishment since 1985. Formalized policy responses to gang problems are in significantly greater evidence than found in earlier national-level surveys. Specialized training is available in 85.4% of the specialized gang crime units responding to the survey; written departmental policies in 52.1%, and jurisdiction encompassing gang crime laws in 62.5%.

The national agency with which local police departments are most likely to report sharing information about gang crime is the Federal Bureau of Investigation (reported by 81.8% of the respondents). Other federal agencies that are cited as contacts by respondents include the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (47.7%) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (22.7%). Four agencies report contact with the Administration for Children and Families National Youth Gang Prevention program. Sharing information with state and regional law enforcement organizations is reported by 29.5% of the respondents. Only 36.4% report directly sharing gang crime information with law enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions. Twelve of the gang unit respondents report the receipt of external agency funding in support of anti-gang programs.

Of the 72 police departments reporting gang problems, 65 (90.3%) completed a questionnaire on strategies attempted and perceived strategy effectiveness. The most commonly reported strategy is identifying gang members which is reported by all but one of the respondents. This strategy also receives the highest percentage of "very effective" ratings (64.1%). The importance and evaluation of effectiveness of this strategy underscores the saliency of information system issues in local responses to gang problems. Ironically the second most frequently reported anti-gang strategy is "cooperating with the media" (by 93.8%

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of the respondents. No other strategy received a percentage of "negative effect" ratings greater than 3%. "Cooperating with the media" is perceived by 18% of those who have tried it as producing a negative effect.

Major policy recommendations of this study are that technical assistance in support of local law enforcement information systems should:

- (1) Encourage an awareness of the need to focus on accurate and routine reporting as well as recording of gang-related information;*
- (2) Place a greater emphasis on gang-related crime data in addition to gang and member data;*
- (3) Specify social demographic characteristics of gang offenders that are most relevant to policy and program planning and decision-making;*
- (4) Link management information system structures to routine and uniform standards of evaluation at the local and national levels.*

# NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

## ANTI-GANG INFORMATION RESOURCES

### DRAFT 1992 FINAL REPORT

National-level studies of the distribution of gang problems and programs have been conducted by Miller (1975, 1982), Needle and Stapleton (1983), and Spergel and Curry (1990). This study constitutes a systematic 1992 national assessment of local law enforcement perceptions of the distribution of gang and gang-like problems in large U.S. cities.

### RESEARCH GOALS

The seven goals of the National Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources (hereafter referred to as the 1992 National Assessment Survey) are to:

- 1. Generate an updated national profile of the geographic distribution of gang problems in large cities as measured by official reaction by local law enforcement agencies.*
- 2. Examine changes in law enforcement perceptions of the U.S. gang problem that have occurred since the 1988 National Youth Gang Survey (Spergel 1990; Spergel & Curry 1990, 1992) and, to the extent possible, earlier national surveys.*
- 3. Assess the quality of information resources used by law enforcement in assessing the scope of local gang problems.*
- 4. Present what information is available on the age, gender, race, and ethnicity of gang members as perceived in law enforcement records.*

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

*Research Goals Continued*

- 5. *Examine the degree to which law enforcement responses to the gang problem are institutionalized at the local level.*
- 6. *Assess what networks exist on local and national levels that enhance or have the potential for enhancing the distribution and sharing of accurate information on the scope of gang problems at local and national levels.*
- 7. *Report the application and perceived effectiveness of selected anti-gang response strategies by local law enforcement agencies.*

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**BACKGROUND**

**Defining Gangs**

A recent research report from the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (Reiner 1992: xxvi) notes, "General gang definitions, though important, are not really used much by law enforcement nor anyone else outside a faculty lounge." We are, however, resolved that if it is not discussed at the outset, disagreements over definitional issues will detract from other findings of this study, some of which are just as important, some perhaps more important than the differences in definition of what is a gang that we (and every prior researcher) find across law enforcement jurisdictions.

To some extent, the debate among academics about the definition of a gang grows out of the erratic history of gang research itself. Earlier in this century, Frederick Thrasher used the term

"gang" to encompass an extremely wide range of groups, some criminal, some not. His definition, classified as a "process-oriented" one by Hagedorn (1988), is one in which the particular processes by which gangs come into being and the daily activities of gang members hold a central place:

*"The gang is an interstitial group originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, esprit de corps, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to a local territory." (Thrasher 1927: 46)*

Studying depression-era "corner boys" in Boston, William F. Whyte (1943) described the social organization of a group of young adults living in a period of career uncertainty prolonged by economic conditions. Located on the social fringes of both conventional and criminal opportunity structures, Whyte's corner boys can be described as anything but violent. As Malcolm Klein (1991, i) notes, "It was in the late 1950s and 1960s that much of our knowledge about gangs was developed," and it is in this period also that we contend the definitional debate has its roots. Klein is referring to a decade of work on gangs by researchers from a range of disciplines (Cohen 1955; Bloch & Niederhoffer 1958; Miller 1958; Cloward & Ohlin 1960; Yablonsky 1962; Spergel 1964; Short & Strodtbeck 1965) who used gangs as an object of study in the development and study of more general theories about delinquency and adolescence. Today this body of research constitutes a major portion of what is identified by juvenile delinquency texts as "social" theories of delinquency. The

epistemological link between gangs and delinquency was forged in this body of research which has been criticized, from one perspective, for tending "to obscure distinctions between gang and delinquent group" (Curry & Spergel 1988: 381) and, from another, for containing "too much theory" on delinquency and "too few facts" on gangs (Hagedorn 1988: 26).

These works in the late 1950s and 1960s constitute a chronological benchmark for what is regarded as a subsequent decrease in public and research interest in gangs. The sense that there was a hiatus from gang research in the seventies and early eighties is conveyed by the summary report of Walter Miller's report for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (1976: 3) which declares, "Gangs are not only back -- but it appears that in many cases they never left." More explicitly in their article "The End of the Gang," Hedy Bookin-Weiner and Ruth Horowitz (1983: 598-599) predicted that gang research "based on situational or structural factors" would in the 1980s be replaced by individual-level research on "offender types and characteristics." Nevertheless, gang research was continuing through the seventies and early eighties, but only through the efforts of a smaller number of researchers (Miller 1966, 1969, 1973, 1974, 1975; Klein 1969, 1971; Spergel 1969, 1984). Miller, Klein, and Spergel each make clear their commitment to assessment, social intervention, and evaluation strategies. These three researchers approached gangs from a social problems perspective. For them, only to the extent that gangs are involved in criminal behavior do gangs in themselves constitute a social problem. The definitions of the gang attributed to each of these researchers reflects that social problems perspective.

*"A gang is a group of recurrently associating individuals with identifiable leadership and internal organization, identifying with or claiming control over territory in the community, and engaging either individually or collectively in violent or other forms of illegal behavior." (Miller 1975: 9)*

*"... Any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who: (a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in their neighborhood; (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name); and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighborhood residents and/or law enforcement agencies." (Klein 1971: 13)*

*"We define gang delinquency or crime as law-violating behavior committed both by juveniles and adults in or related to groups that are complexly organized although sometimes diffuse, sometimes cohesive with established leadership and rules. The gang also engages in a range of crime but significantly more violence within a framework of communal values in respect to mutual support, conflict relations with other gangs, and a tradition often of turf, colors, signs, and symbols. Subgroups of the gang may be differentially committed to various delinquent or criminal patterns, such as drug trafficking, gang fighting, or burglary. The concepts of delinquent group and youth gang are not exclusive of each other but represent distinctive social phenomena." (Curry & Spergel 1988: 382)*

By 1991, Malcolm Klein (p. i) speaks of "a new explosion in gang knowledge." It is with this "explosion" that the debate over definition as it affects this study becomes most salient. Fundamental to the intensification of the definitional debate was the publication of several



ethnographic studies (Klein 1971; Moore 1978, 1991; Campbell 1984; Horowitz 1983; Spergel 1984; Vigil 1988; Hagedorn 1988; Chin 1990; Jankowski 1991; Bing 1991) that are based primarily on information collected from gang members themselves. In keeping with the tradition of Thrasher and Whyte, these studies describe how gangs come into being and how gang members lead their lives. What taking such an approach means for defining gangs is expressed by John Hagedorn (1988: 82), "Defining a gang has more than a little importance today." He continues, "Since gangs are targets for vigorous law enforcement efforts, the current definition of a gang needs logically to reinforce a gang's criminal and violent image." Citing research by Marjorie Zatz (1987) in Phoenix, Hagedorn suggests that the criminal image of gangs "has been promoted by law enforcement mainly to justify applications for federal grants to support special gang units." Given these conclusions, it is not surprising that Hagedorn is extremely critical of Walter Miller and Malcolm Klein for their roles in "criminalizing the current definition of gangs."

Instead of definitions of gangs that include criminal behavior as a criterion, Hagedorn (p. 85) argues for definitions of gangs that take into account "the process by which they are formed and their specific activities." As an example, Hagedorn offers Thrasher's original definition cited above. For his own part, Hagedorn proposes a locally specific "process-oriented definition." Hagedorn's (p. 107) process-oriented definition is a definition that "attempts to describe different gangs in motion, as their members grow, change, conflict with others, and try to survive." Advantages that Hagedorn attributes to his process-oriented definition are that it assumes that each "gang is unique" (p. 84) and it allows gangs to vary

"not only between cities, but within cities, between ethnic groups and sexes, and over time."

What Hagedorn considers to be an advantage is viewed in another light by Miller (1989: 785):

*"It is almost impossible to know what kind of unit Hagedorn's "gang" refers to. He evades the task of presenting a definition that would permit operationalization or intercity comparability, presenting instead a "process-oriented definition" that is not a definition at all but rather a schematic developmental history of some Milwaukee groups."*

Another recent contribution from the ethnographic perspective that takes an entirely different approach to the problem of defining a gang is that of Jankowski (1991: 29) who defines a gang as "an organization composed of individuals who possess defiant individualist characters -- that is to say, a gang is organized deviant individualism." According to Jankowski (1991: 24), "the defiant individualist character is composed of seven attributes" -- competitiveness, a sense of mistrust or wariness, self-reliance, social isolation, survival instinct, a Social Darwinist worldview, and a defiant air. These deviant individuals are brought together by each's rational decision that by being in a gang, there are "greater opportunities to improve the quality of their lives." As Klein (1992: 81) notes Jankowski's definition can include only gangs that are "organized, cohesive, rational decision makers," and excludes "the episodic, often irrational or unplanned, flowing nature of both membership and member behavior" stressed by earlier writers. From a methodological viewpoint, such a definition requires in-depth study of individual gang member attitudes. To know that a group fits Jankowski's definition of a gang, a researcher must know the minds of each and every

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

*+ typo*

*p. 7*

*Competitiveness*

individual gang member as well as the social processes by which the gang comes into and stays in existence.

An alternative approach to the definitional question has been proposed by Horowitz (1990: 38) who argues that "it is not necessary to agree on the parameters of what constitutes a gang. Agreement will likely never be achieved, and definitions often obscure problematic areas and may not encourage the development of new questions ..." She concludes (p. 53), "Looking at gangs in different ways allows for the exploration of distinct aspects of the gang experience. Although it may be important for an author to set the parameters of what he or she is researching, there is little reason to confine our research to one particular definition of the gang."

Horowitz's assumption about agreement not being achieved is supported by the findings of all previous national-level surveys of gang problems as they exist in different cities (Miller 1982; Needle & Stapleton 1983; Spergel & Curry 1992). Miller (1980: 115) writes, "During the past fifty years, the major concept used to guide the examination of this phenomenon has been that of the 'gang'. At no time has there been anything close to consensus as to what a gang might be -- by scholars, by criminal justice workers, by the general public." Needle and Stapleton surveying only police departments found considerable variation across six criteria that they used to analyze local definitions of "gang". Spergel and Curry (1992) analyzed open-ended gang definitions from 236 of their 254 respondents including law enforcement, criminal justice, school, grass roots, government, and social service agency representatives. Based on twelve analytic criteria, they conclude, "Variations in definitions of gangs cannot be

attributed to geographic location or respondent category, nor can variations in definitional criteria be attributed to the ethnicity of the gang members with which the agency deals or the race or ethnicity of the respondent." They conclude that "a more restricted definition, one on which a greater number of agencies and sites could reach consensus, would be a valuable contribution to the formulation of a national gang policy."

In this study, we feel that we have had no other choice but to follow the methodology of all previous national-level surveys of gang problems. As noted below, we have first asked whether a respondent's agency officially identifies a "gang problem" within their jurisdiction with the three restrictions that a gang (1) is called a "gang," (2) is involved in criminal activity, and (3) includes youth in its membership. Only if the agency representative answered affirmatively, did we ask for the agency's official definition (if one exists) of a 'gang.' This approach specifically meets Hagedorn's and Horowitz's specification that unique entities considered gangs in some community not be excluded from the analysis by some rigid, fixed definition of what a gang should be. We have, however, subsequently excluded from our analysis information on such groups as motorcycle clubs (or gangs), the mafia, prison gangs (that did not originate outside of correctional institutions), and hate groups. Beyond these intentional exclusions, this approach allows us to encompass differences in local definitions of what is regarded as a "gang" as part of our analysis.

### Law Enforcement Information and Gangs

In fact, this is not a study of gangs, the processes of their development, or how gang members live their lives. This is a study of law enforcement agencies and their reactions to gangs. It is also less a study of individual police officer opinions than it is an assessment of local-level law enforcement policies toward gang problems. For those who do not immediately concur that law enforcement reaction to gang problems is a topic worthy of study, some justification is required.

Joan Moore (1991) has suggested that the perceived danger to the public from gangs may be as much a matter of a "moral panic" generated by law enforcement as real community concern. Jankowski (1991) portrays law enforcement agencies as institutionally driven to cast the public presentation on the nature of gangs in a specific light that emphasizes violence. John Hagedorn (1990: 244-245) has specifically characterized work using law enforcement data by such researchers as Miller (1975) and Spergel and Curry (1990) as "courthouse criminology" that provides us with "little accurate information" on gangs. With this assessment of the value of law enforcement data often comes a methodological directive that the only "real" or "good" gang research is that in which gang members themselves "participate" (Hagedorn 1988: 167-169). Hagedorn may be correct in his assessment when the goal is studying the etiology of youth gang phenomena and developing policy approaches to altering the economic infrastructure to which many attribute the existence and level of today's gang violence. We feel, though, that a complete dismissal of research on law

enforcement reaction to gangs and gang-related crime ignores a whole range of important research findings, including some of those raised by Hagedorn.

The significance of the role that police reaction plays in the evolution of gang problems at local and national levels is nowhere more vividly argued than by Hagedorn (1988: 151) in his study of gangs in Milwaukee. Hagedorn's three stages of the Milwaukee gang problem -- denial, recognition, and repression -- are each stated in terms of police reaction rather than in terms of the behavior of gangs. He also emphasizes the relevance of links between law enforcement anti-gang responses in different cities in his observation (p. 55) that he has "more documentation of Chicago police traveling from city to city agitating for a certain type of response to gangs, than we have documentation of traveling gang organizers." In one case, Hagedorn (p. 96) even attributes the elevation of a gang member to gang leadership to the behavior of the police. According to the gang member that Hagedorn identifies as "David," "But the reason I actually became the leader was because of the policemen. They called me the leader first and they just spreaded it around." "When ... newspaper articles appeared calling me the leader, everyone just thought I was."

To a smaller degree, Moore and Jankowski also describe the impact of police reaction on the development of the gang problem, on one hand, and the behavior of gang members, on the other. Moore (1988) attributes the cohesion of Los Angeles gangs in the 1940s to the strong reaction of law enforcement to the "Sleepy Lagoon" case and later in the 1950s to the incarceration of Chicano gang members involved in heroin use. Jankowski (1991) suggests that gangs and police departments routinely engage in accommodative behavior toward one

another. The interaction of individual gang members and the criminal justice system is characterized by Jankowski (pp. 263-269) as a series of "procedural rituals."

Another advantage of research on law enforcement reaction to gangs is the comparability of data, at least within limitations specifically spelled out in our analysis. Maxson, Klein, and Cunningham (1992: 1) express a point that is made earlier by the two principal authors (Maxson, Gordon, & Klein, 1985) that, "With the number of cities having documented street gang problems swelling to well over 200, law enforcement is currently the best source available for comparisons of gang prevalence and violence." Spergel and his coauthors (1988) draw the same conclusion, selecting law enforcement agency estimates of the number of gangs and the number of gang members for 34 of the 45 sites included in their national survey. In several cases, specifically Los Angeles (Jackson & McBride, 1985) and Chicago (Bobrowski, 1988), law enforcement agencies have developed systematic recording procedures and computerized gang information systems. The liabilities of such systems are revealed by statistics such as the one reported by the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (Reiner 1992: xxxiii) that "just under 47% ... of all Black males aged 21-24 in L.A. County ... appear to have records in the combined gang databases" of the Los Angeles county and city GREAT system. Without the tabulation and analysis of gang statistics, this observation would not have been possible. In our study, assessing the needs and shortcomings of law enforcement data bases is a major objective of the analysis.

## Previous National-Level Surveys of Gang Problems

National-level studies of the distribution of gang problems and programs have been conducted by Miller (1975, 1982), Needle & Stapleton (1983), and Spergel & Curry (1990). Several additional comparable studies are also currently underway (National Institute of Justice, 1991). Since these prior studies provide a basis for our approach to studying the contemporary level of gang problems as identified by law enforcement and for comparing changes in the distribution of gang problems over time, we deal with each separately.

### MILLER (1975, 1982)

Walter Miller (1975) used population size, the nature of available local information on gangs, and an effort to achieve "some order of regional representation" to select the twelve large U.S. cities included in what is generally regarded as the earliest systematic effort to examine the scope of the national gang problem.<sup>1</sup> From these dozen cities, 159 staff members from 81 agencies participated in 64 interviews. Of the eighteen agency types into which Miller broke his respondents, the largest group represented police departments (37 respondents or 23.3% of the total). Miller's (1982) second and larger study of the national scope of the gang problem expanded his 1975 analysis to include agency respondents from 36 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas with populations over one million and 150 cities with populations over 100,000.

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<sup>1</sup> In his manuscript, Miller acknowledges only two prior efforts at national-level studies of gang problems, a nine-city survey by Bernstein (1964) and the review of local studies of gangs by Malcolm Klein (1969) that is an appendix to the 1968 report of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence.



Miller's first question for respondents in the preliminary and subsequent study was "In your judgement, is there a 'gang problem' in this city?" After providing their answers to this question, respondents were asked a number of probing questions to gain some understanding of what they meant by the term "gang." From an analysis of respondent answers, Miller (1975: p. 9) constructed the definition cited above. From his analysis of respondents' answers, Miller was satisfied that his respondents were sufficiently able to distinguish gangs from "ad hoc assemblages of youth" or "sporadic assemblage(s) of street-corner loungers." Miller's classification decisions are described (1982: 6) thus, "For present purposes, in order for a community to be designated a 'gang-problem' locality, there must be substantial agreement among knowledgeable persons that such a problem exists." On the basis of his results, Miller classified six of his twelve 1975 cities as "gang problem" cities and six as "group problem" cities, explicitly assuming that cities with gang problems also have group crime problems.

Applying the same kind of classification procedure to a wider range of data (including official records and media accounts), Miller identifies 18 (50%) of the 36 SMSA's with populations over one million as reporting a gang problem at some point in the 1970-1980 decade and 41 (27.3%) of the 150 cities with populations over 100,000 as reporting a gang problem at some point in the 1970-1980 decade. With analytic care, Miller derived a number of insights from his baseline data. In 1982, he projected a national estimate of 97,940 gang members in 2,285 gangs located in 286 cities. He postulated the largest concentration of gangs to be in California (more than 30% of all U.S. gangs). Miller also discerned a

pronounced relationship between the presence of reported gang problems and city size, except in California. He suggested that this greater prevalence of gangs in smaller California cities might presage a future spread of gang problems to smaller sized cities for the nation as a whole.

### NEEDLE AND STAPLETON (1983)

Needle and Stapleton (1983) conducted a random survey of police departments in cities with populations over 100,000. Of 78 city police departments selected for the sample, 60 agreed to participate. Of the 60 participating police departments, 27 (45%) responded affirmatively to Needle and Stapleton's question, "Do you have youth gangs in your community or jurisdiction?" From these 27 respondents, the researchers solicited the department's definition of a youth gang. Using five criteria that Miller used to construct his 1975 definition of a gang, Needle and Stapleton added dress or body decoration including identifying graffiti as a salient criterion of gang definition. They found that only four of the 27 departments offered definitions that fulfilled all six of the criteria. Violent behavior was the most common criterion (by 21 departments or 77.8%) attributed to gangs. Fourteen (51.9%) of their 27 respondents included the criteria of dress, body decoration, or identifying graffiti in their definitions of what constitutes a gang.

**SPERGEL AND CURRY (1990, 1992)**

In its assessment phase, the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program, a cooperative project of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the University of Chicago, selected a sample of 254 gang prevention, intervention, and suppression programs in 45 cities and six sites from an initial population of 101 cities or localities either known to have organized responses to gang problems or to have been included in prior national-level surveys. Three of the initial population of cities were excluded because they were not on the U.S. mainland. In each of the other 98 localities, a key agency, usually the police, was contacted by phone. Direct contact with a representative of the agency informed on gang or youth crime problems was sought, and, once identified, this representative was asked two kinds of questions. The first concerned the perceived existence of a youth gang crime problem, and the second was intended to establish the existence of an organized agency or community group response. In this screening process, Spergel and Curry (1992) define "a youth gang crime problem" as "simply one perceived or identified as such and calling upon itself a special agency and community reaction." Of the 98 cities or localities screened, 74 (75.5%) were identified as having organized gangs or gang activities. Of these 74 cities and localities, 45 (60.8%) were identified as having organized responses and were included in the more comprehensive survey. The 254 respondents from these 45 localities and six sites were asked to provide their definitions of a gang, a gang member, and a gang incident. From their analysis of the definitions provided by these 254 agencies engaged in coordinated community-based responses to the gang problem, Spergel

and Curry (1992) suggest, "we obtain almost as many distinct (254) definitions of what a gang, a gang member, and a gang incident are." The authors do suggest the need for common definitions and offer,

*"A gang ... is somewhat organized, usually has some duration, is sometimes characterized by turf concerns, symbols, special dress, colors, often has special interest in violence for status-providing purposes, and is recognized as a gang by both its members and others."*

### ONGOING RESEARCH (1991-1992)

George Knox (1991) reports preliminary results from a ten-percent random survey of police chiefs listed in the 1990 Directory of Law Enforcement Agencies. Of the 236 police departments responding to his survey, 160 (67.8%) report that a gang problem exists in their jurisdiction. Additional results from Knox's survey as well as methodological details should prove insightful. The National Institute of Justice (1991) listing of research and development awards include announcements of a survey on gang migration by Cheryl Maxson and Malcolm Klein and a national assessment of gangs in correctional facilities conducted by the American Correctional Association. Never before have we been so close to so much comparative data on national-level gang problems, but perhaps never before have we been so exposed to media, government, and public concern about these problems.

## DATA

### SAMPLING DESIGN

In order to assess the distribution of gang problems in large cities, police departments in all cities with populations of 200,000 or more based on 1990 Bureau of Census projected estimates are surveyed. Since law enforcement agency information and responsibilities are in most cases defined by politically-defined jurisdictions, we use city populations, rather than Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area populations, as the basis for "large" city selection. This definition of "large" cities as those having a population of 200,000 or more is the one most recently used by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (1989) in its classification of police departments by city size. Three southern cities, Shreveport (LA), Jackson (MS), and Mobile (AL) did not come up to projected size when final 1990 census statistics were released. All three have 1990 populations greater than 195,000, and there are no other U.S. cities with populations between 195,000 and 200,000, so we feel that we do not depart from our original concern with the largest U.S. cities by including these three in our analysis.

In order to assess the degree to which the distribution of perceived gang problems by police departments have changed over time, we have also surveyed 43 police departments in jurisdictions with populations that do not meet our criteria for "large" but that were included in the 1988 National Gang Survey (Spergel & Curry 1990, 1992).

## DATA COLLECTION

For each police department included in the survey, we obtained the address of the senior official, usually a Chief of Police or Police Commissioner. Each received a letter from our project's principal investigator and a letter from the federal funding agency describing the project and encouraging participation. Copies of each letter are contained in Appendix A. Each administrator was asked to refer the interviewer to the individual representative of the agency who could provide the most information about the agency's processing of information on gangs or other youth-based groups engaged in criminal activity.

Anonymity has been intentionally avoided. It is assumed that accurately assessing local law enforcement perception of the extent of the gang problem on a national level requires a census of official, not personal, perspectives on the problem. Respondents were instructed that the names of contacts within each police department would be listed in technical reports produced for dissemination by the funding agency. For the most part, departmental administrators have taken our request for an officially identified departmental representative seriously. Examples of department correspondence are contained in Appendix B. Appendix C lists the names, addresses, and phone numbers for each law enforcement agency included in the survey in alphabetical order by large-versus-smaller city and city.

Once respondents were identified and contacted, they were asked, "Are gangs that engage in criminal activity involving youths present in your jurisdiction?" This question creates a de facto three-component limitation on what we treat as gangs in this study. Gangs (1) are groups, (2) involve youths, and (3) engage in criminal activity. Our interviewers were asked

to make it clear to respondents that we wish to exclude from this study motorcycle gangs, hate groups, prison gangs, and organized crime groups to the degree that they do not explicitly involve youths in their membership or do not engage in criminal activity.

Following the specific question about official recognition of the presence of gangs, respondents were asked if their department officially recognized the presence of other kinds of organized groups that engage in criminal activity and involve youths that their department identify as crews, posses, or some other designation. Respondents whose departments do not officially recognize the presence of gangs, posses, crews, or any other group involving youths and engaging in criminal activities were thanked for their time and asked no further questions. Respondents who answered any of the questions about the presence of gangs or gang-like groups affirmatively were asked a sequence of other questions on record-keeping procedures to determine eligibility for participation in other parts of the survey.

The departmental administrator for each of these respondents was sent a letter of appreciation and a computer printout confirming the identity of the gang information contact for their department and the official responses. All administrators and respondents have been invited to contact the project with updated information should their departmental status change. Within two months of the initial contact, all departments received a copy of a draft technical report containing city-by-city information on data received to date. In several cases, departmental administrators took advantage of these opportunities to change recorded responses. As late as six months after their original declaration of having a gang problem, one city department changed its position to that of not having a gang problem. For each

case in our analysis, we have followed a strict procedure of adhering to the official policy position of the law enforcement agencies involved in the study, even though we realize that the nature of such decisions may in some cases be more of a political decision than one based on uniform decision criteria (Huff 1989). Our goal has been to obtain through this study as "conservative" as possible an estimate of the magnitude of the U.S. gang problem as reflected by the official reaction, record-keeping, and reporting of local law enforcement agencies.

Based on their affirmative answers to questions on the officially recognized presence of gangs and the kinds of record-keeping employed by their departments, respondents were sent customized questionnaire packets and a separate letter by overnight registered mail reasserting the importance of the study and the need for a cooperative response. Departments were only asked for specifics on aspects of the gang problem which their representative had reported the keeping of information. All departments indicating the officially recognized presence of a gang problem (regardless of reported record-keeping procedures) were asked to complete a definitional questionnaire and a strategy effectiveness questionnaire. All departments reporting the presence of a departmental unit specifically charged with dealing with gang crimes were asked to complete a policy questionnaire and questionnaires on local and national-level unit network linkages. These questionnaires are contained in Appendix D.

### **GANG PROBLEMS IN LARGE CITIES**

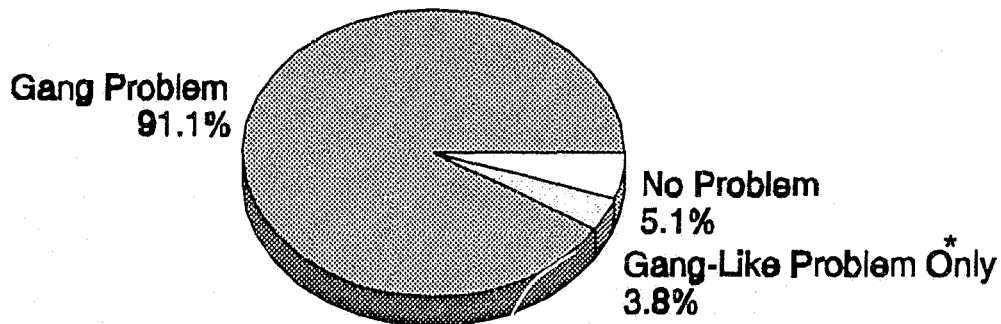
For all 79 large cities, project interviewers were able to interview by phone the representative of each police department most knowledgeable on matters of gangs and youth

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***



crime (as identified by the department's chief administrator). As noted above, each department received at least two followup written communications reporting our recording of the department's official position and giving administrators and departmental representatives an opportunity to make corrections. Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1 show our results on the reported presence of gang problems for the 79 large cities.

**Figure 1. Reported Presence of Gang Crime Problems:  
79 Largest U.S. Cities**



\* Crew, Posse, or Drug Organization Problem Only

**Figure 2. 79 Largest U.S. Cities by Reported Gang Problems**



• No Reported Gang Problem

● Reported Gang Problem

▲ Reported Gang-Like Problem



Table 1. 79 Largest U.S. Cities by Type of Officially Reported Gang Problem			
<b>Reported Gang Problem</b>			
Akron (OH)	Fresno (CA)	Omaha (NE)	
Albuquerque (NM)	Honolulu (HI)	Philadelphia (PA)	
Anaheim (CA)	Houston (TX)	Phoenix (AZ)	
Anchorage (AK)	Indianapolis (IN)	Portland (OR)	
Arlington (TX)	Jackson (MS)	Riverside (CA)	
Atlanta (GA)	Jacksonville (FL)	Rochester (NY)	
Aurora (CO)	Jersey City (NJ)	Sacramento (CA)	
Austin (TX)	Kansas City (MO)	San Antonio (TX)	
Baton Rouge (LA)	Las Vegas (NV)	San Diego (CA)	
Birmingham (AL)	Lexington (KY)	San Francisco (CA)	
Boston (MA)	Long Beach (CA)	San Jose (CA)	
Buffalo (NY)	Los Angeles City (CA)	Santa Ana (CA)	
Charlotte (NC)	Louisville (KY)	Seattle (WA)	
Chicago (IL)	Mesa (AZ)	Shreveport (LA)	
Cincinnati (OH)	Miami (FL)	St Louis (MO)	
Cleveland (OH)	Milwaukee (WI)	St Paul (MN)	
Colorado Springs (CO)	Minneapolis (MN)	St Petersburg (FL)	
Columbus (OH)	Mobile (AL)	Stockton (CA)	
Corpus Christi (TX)	Nashville (TN)	Tampa (FL)	
Dallas (TX)	New Orleans (LA)	Toledo (OH)	
Denver (CO)	New York (NY)	Tucson (AZ)	
Detroit (MI)	Norfolk (VA)	Tulsa (OK)	
El Paso (TX)	Oakland (CA)	Virginia Beach (VA)	
Fort Worth (TX)	Oklahoma City (OK)	Wichita (KS)	
<b>Drug Organization Problem Only</b>			
Baltimore (MD)			
<b>Posse Problem Only</b>			
Raleigh (NC)			
<b>Crew Problem Only</b>			
Washington (DC)			
<b>No Reported Problem</b>			
Memphis (TN)	Newark (NJ)	Pittsburgh (PA)	Richmond (VA)

Of the large city police departments 72 (91.1%) report the presence of criminally involved groups that they label as "gangs" in their jurisdictions. Of the seven jurisdictions not reporting gang problems, three (3.8%) report the presence of gang-like criminally involved, youth-based groups that are officially identified by some label other than "gangs". Baltimore (MD) reports a "drug organization" problem; Raleigh (NC), a posse problem; and Washington, D.C., a crew problem. Police departments in Memphis (TN), Newark (NJ), and Pittsburgh (PA) report the presence of no officially acknowledged gangs, posses, or crews. If we combine the three cities with gang-like crime problems with the 72 reporting gang problems, 94.9% of large U.S. city police departments currently report the officially recognized presence of gangs, crews, posses, or drug organizations engaged in criminal activity and involving youths within their jurisdictions.

#### **CHANGES IN THE GANG PROBLEM OVER TIME**

The single variable for which we have obtained the most consistent information across cities is law enforcement agencies' official identification or non-identification of the presence of a gang problem within each jurisdiction. It is a variable that we have repeated back to departmental administrators and representatives over a period of several months. Our definition of a gang problem, as we noted above, is the presence of groups that engage in criminal activity and involve youths that have elicited an official law enforcement reaction and that are identified by law enforcement by the designation "gangs". It is on the basis of

differences in reported official law enforcement reaction to perceived gang problems that we now make comparisons of our findings with those of prior national-level surveys of the geographic distribution of gang problems and reactions across specific cities.

**MILLER (1975, 1982)**

Miller's (1975: 11) first analysis included twelve major cities all of which are included in our sample. Table 2 contrasts Miller's identification of each city as a "gang problem city" with the 1992 perception of the city's police department.

Table 2. Comparison of Miller (1975) Findings and 1992 Findings.			
Classification of City by Miller (1975)	1992 Police Department Perception		Miller (1975) Totals
	Gang Problem	No Gang Problem	
Gang Problem City	6	0	6 (50%)
Not a Gang Problem City	4	2 *	6 (50%)
1992 Totals	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)	12

\* Washington, D.C., reports a "crew problem" and Baltimore (MD) reports a "drug organization problem."

The increase in the perceived presence of gang problems from 50% to 83.3% is dramatic, especially when it is noted that Washington, D.C., classifies its comparatively violent youth crime problem as a "crew" problem and Baltimore reports the presence of a drug organization problem.

Miller's (1982: p. II-11, Table II-2) draft manuscript<sup>2</sup> reports the presence of gang problems in large cities by city size. Table 3 contrasts the comparable 1992 data.

Table 3. Comparison of Miller (1982) Findings and 1992 Findings.						
Size Category in 1,000's	Miller (1982)			1992 Findings		
	# Cities	Reporting Gang Problems	%	# Cities	Reporting Gang Problems	%
Over 1,000	6	5	83.3	8	8	100
500 - 1,000	17	7	41.2	15	12	80 *
200 - 500	32	10	31.3	53	50	94.3 *

\* Chi-square test for difference from prior proportion significant at 0.01 level.

The proportion of cities with reported gang problems has increased for each size category of city. The magnitude of the increase in the two categories for smaller cities is statistically significant.

It must be noted that in both his original and extended analyses, Miller utilized the perceptions of police and other types of community agencies and a decision rule based on a majority of "knowledgeable" agency representatives rather than the official position of police departments alone. Hence, Miller's designation process is not as comparable to the 1992

<sup>2</sup> Publication of Miller's second report by the Department of Justice is still officially pending; and, according to telephone communication with Department staff and Professor Miller, publication is currently in progress. I am working from a draft copy obtained from Professor Irving Spergel that is missing appendices that list specific classifications of metropolitan areas and cities as having gang problems.

results as are those of the two subsequent national-level studies of the distribution of gang problems discussed below.

### NEEDLE AND STAPLETON (1983)

As in the 1992 study, Needle and Stapleton relied on the perception of police departments in identifying 27 of the 60 cities included in their study as gang problem cities. Our 1992 study design does not explicitly include all of the cities from which Needle and Stapleton (1983: 6) obtained responses in their study.<sup>3</sup> Needle and Stapleton's categories for city size are 100,000-249,999; 250,000-499,999; 500,000-999,999; and over 1 million. Our 1992 survey design does include all of the cities in Needle and Stapleton's three categories of cities over 250,000 population, and 17 (54.8%) of the 31 cities with 1983 populations between 100,000 and 249,999.

Table 4 on the following page compares the 1983 and 1992 data from police departments for the 44 cities included in both studies. From 50% of the cities reporting gang problems in the 1983 report, the percentage increases to 90.9% reporting the presence of gangs in 1992. The only department reporting a gang problem to Needle and Stapleton and not currently reporting one is Newark, New Jersey. In this comparison, the cities and agencies for the two time periods are the same, the question asked is the same, and the classification process is the

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<sup>3</sup> The cities studied by Needle and Stapleton for which we do not gather data are Amherst (NY), Davenport (IO), Dayton (OH), Elizabeth (NJ), Eugene (OR), Greensboro (NC), Hayward (CA), Hunstville (AL), Lakewood (CO), Little Rock (AR), New Haven (CN), Portsmouth (VA), South Bend (IN), Springfield (IL), Waco (TX), and Wichita Falls (TX). Those reporting the presence of gangs in 1982 are Davenport, Hayward, Lakewood, New Haven, and Portsmouth (5 of 16 or 31.3%).

same. A simple non-parametric chi-square test of the resulting change in the perceived distribution of the gang problem over the decade is significantly different from the earlier estimate at the 0.001 level of statistical significance.

Table 4. Comparison of Needle and Stapleton (1983) Findings and 1992 Findings for 44 U.S. Cities.			
1983 Police Department Perception Needle and Stapleton (1983)	1992 Police Department Perception		Needle & Stapleton (1983) Totals
	Gang Problem	No Gang Problem	
Gang Problem City	21	1	22 (50%)
No Gang Problem	19	3	22 (50%)
1992 Totals	40 (90.9%)	4 (9.1%)	44
* Chi-square test for difference from prior proportion significant at 0.001 level.			

**SPERGEL AND CURRY (1990, 1992)**

Spergel and Curry report gathering their data in 1988 for the year 1987. Our project has been unable to contact the designated police department representatives in two cities identified by Spergel and Curry as having a gang problem but no organized response in 1988. This leaves us with 85 cities for which we have reports of gang problems at the two time points. Of 23 cities identified by Spergel and Curry as not having a gang problem in 1988, 15 (65.2%) report a gang problem in 1992 (Table 5). Overall 90.6% of the cities report a gang problem in 1992 as compared to 72.9% in 1988. Applying a chi-square test to the change in



the percentage reveals that the difference is statistically significant at the 0.001 level. For the 50 largest cities included in both surveys, the change is from 74% to 92% reporting gang problems; and for the 35 smaller cities, from 71.4% to 88.6%.

Table 5. Comparison of Spergel and Curry 1988 Findings and 1992 Findings for 85 U.S. Cities.			
1988 Police Department Perception Curry and Spergel (1992)	1992 Police Department Perception		Curry & Spergel 1988 Totals
	Gang Problem	No Gang Problem	
Gang Problem City	62	0	62 (72.9%)
No Gang Problem	15	8	23 (27.1%)
1992 Totals	77 (90.6%)	8 (9.4%)	85
* Chi-square test for difference from prior proportion significant at 0.001 level.			

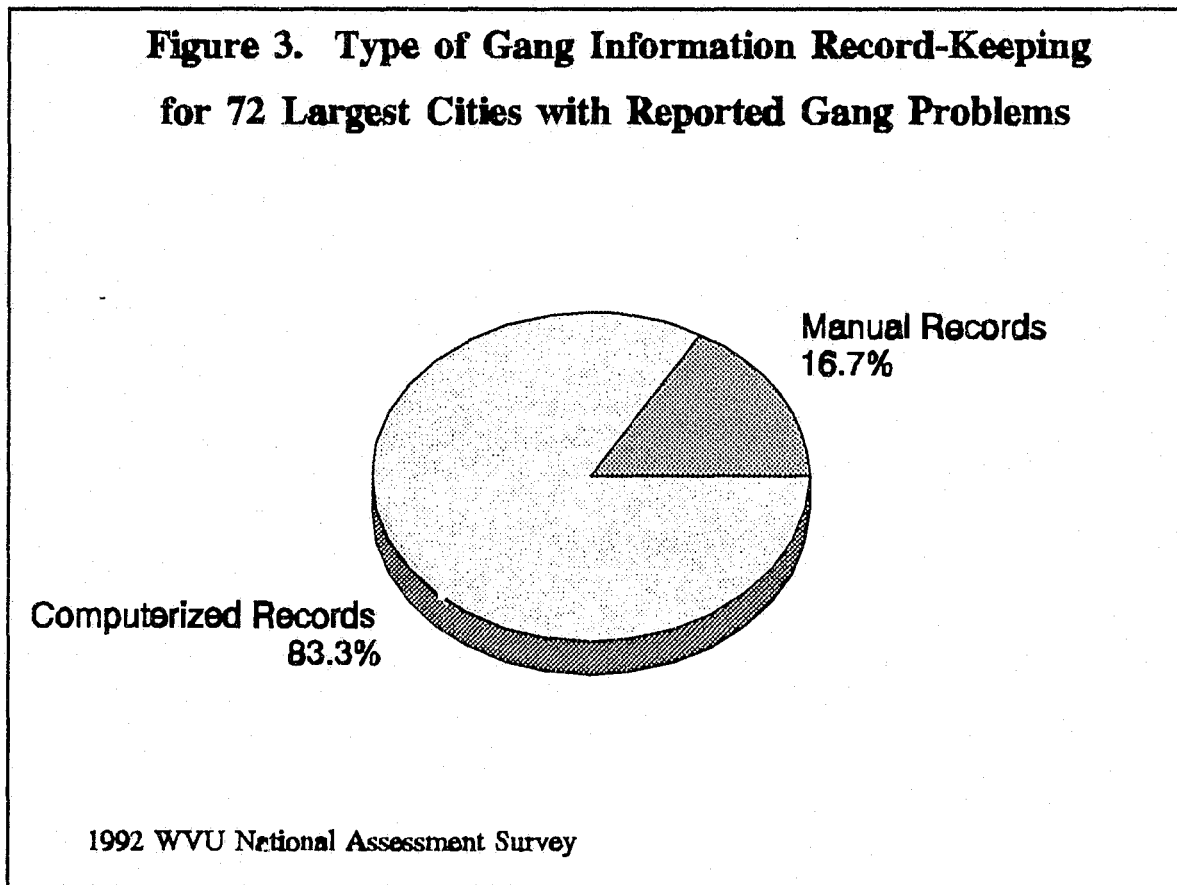
### THE QUALITY OF GANG INFORMATION

For the cities reporting gang problems, the immediate questions are "How do they know?" and "What do they know?" In order to answer these questions, we asked each respondent who reported that their police department officially recognizes or is officially reacting to a gang problem to provide us with additional specific information on what kind of information they record, what kind of information they are capable of reporting, and what definition of "gang" is used by the department.

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**Recording Gang Information**

The increased availability of microcomputers has over the last decade greatly changed the processes by which information is recorded and stored. As Figure 3 shows, a majority (83.3%) of the 72 large city police departments reporting gang problems, use computers to record and maintain information on the gangs in their jurisdictions.



Of the 16.7% of departments who report that they depend on manual (or paper) records to maintain their local information on gangs, a number report having access to computers for

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

**Figure 4. Gang Information Recording-Keeping Method for  
72 Largest U.S. Cities with Reported Gang Problems**



■ Maintain Manual Records

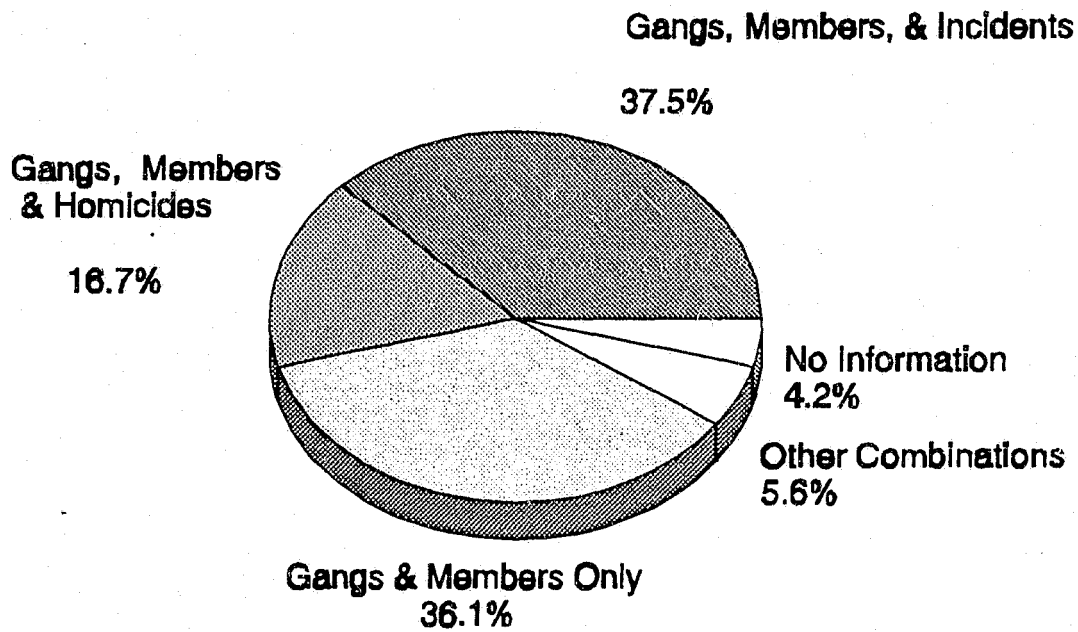
◆ Maintain Computer Records

### Reporting Gang Information

A major finding is that to a large extent, computers (as well as paper files) are repositories into which information is deposited, but from which information can only be retrieved in limited amounts and form. For instance, in many cases, computerized information systems do make it possible to access records on an individual offender or incident. Such systems, however, often fail as management information systems. That is, users are unable to obtain information from the system that is in a form required for administrators and policy-makers charged with decision-making. Nowhere is this failure to be able to obtain this kind of information more evident than in the capacity of departments to report information on the scope of gang problems in local jurisdictions.

Here we assume the scope of the gang problem to be defined in terms of three measures -- the number of gangs, the number of gang members, and the number of gang-related crimes (Spergel 1990; Spergel & Curry 1992). Figures 5 and 6 and Table 6 on the following pages show the distribution of gang information reporting capacity on these three different dimensions across large city jurisdictions. Of the 72 large city police departments reporting gang problems, all report the maintenance of either written or computerized records. Yet, only 27 (37.5%) are able to report the number of gangs, number of gang members, and number of gang incidents for their jurisdictions in 1991. Another 12 (16.7%) report numbers of gangs, members, and gang-related homicides. The capacity to report numbers of gangs and members, but not incidents, is found in 26 (36.1%) of the departments.

**Figure 5. Gang Information Statistical Reporting Capacity for 72 Largest U.S. Cities with Reported Gang Problems**



1992 WVU National Assessment Survey

*(Figure 6 on the following page)*

Outside of these subsets of cities, information reporting capacity becomes extremely locally unique. New York City Police Department has recently defined its gang crime problem to include only Asian gangs. The departmental representative describes the complete reconstruction of the existing computer system that maintained records on gangs, members, and incidents. At this time, the only available official statistic for 1991 for New York City is the 19 gang homicides attributed to oriental gangs.

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**Figure 6. Gang Information Reporting Capacity by Types of Data for 72 Large U.S. Cities with Reported Gang Problems**



◆ Data on Gangs, Members, & Incidents

▼ Data on Gangs, Members, & Homicides

▽ Data on Gangs & Members

+ Selected Data of One Kind

○ No Data Reported

Table 6. Available Gang Information for 1991 for 72 Largest U.S. Cities with Gang Problems

City	# of Gangs	# of Gang Members	Total # of Gang-Related Incidents	# of Gang-Related Homicides
Akron (OH)	NA	NA	40	40
Albuquerque (NM)	60	6000	NA	NA
Anaheim (CA)	35	800	NA	NA
Anchorage (AK)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Arlington (TX)	10	100	NA	NA
Atlanta (GA)	12	1013	43	0
Aurora (CO)	88	1512	316	2
Austin (TX)	110	2987	NA	NA
Baton Rouge (LA)	6	165	NA	NA
Birmingham (AL)	5	1500	NA	NA
Boston (MA)	70	2200	12	12
Buffalo (NY)	12	275	84	20
Charlotte (NC)	1	20	NA	NA
Chicago (IL)	41	29000	4765	133
Cincinnati (OH)	25	275	4	4
Cleveland (OH)	100	1500	271	30
Colorado Springs (CO)	60	600	NA	NA
Columbus (OH)	11	200	NA	NA
Corpus Christi (TX)	30	700	40	3
Dallas (TX)	237	4053	1648	11
Denver (CO)	147	5100	6109	20
Detroit (MI)	30	645	NA	NA
El Paso (TX)	277	4908	22	22
Fort Worth (TX)	5	50	2	2
Fresno (CA)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Honolulu (HI)	45	1020	NA	NA
Houston (TX)	104	1098	NA	NA
Indianapolis (IN)	100	1000	666	10
Jackson (MS)	12	1600	NA	NA
Jacksonville (FL)	41	533	NA	NA
Jersey City (NJ)	26	1150	898	5
Kansas City (MO)	35	450	NA	NA
Las Vegas (NV)	70	5000	17	17
Lexington (KY)	4	25	25	0
Long Beach (CA)	66	10873	616	53
Los Angeles (CA)	503	55258	8528	375

NA = Information Not Available

(Table 6. continued on the following page)

**Table 6. Available Gang Information for 1991 for 72 Largest U.S. Cities with Gang Problems**

City	# of Gangs	# of Gang Members	Total # of Gang-Related Incidents	# of Gang-Related Homicides
Louisville (KY)	10	250	1	0
Mesa (AZ)	10	518	469	2
Miami (FL)	94	3246	NA	NA
Milwaukee (WI)	35	6000	NA	NA
Minneapolis (MN)	37	5700	1573	27
Mobile (AL)	3	3000	865	4
Nashville (TN)	41	71	NA	NA
New Orleans (LA)	19	251	NA	NA
New York (NY)	NA	NA	19	19
Norfolk (VA)	47	650	NA	NA
Oakland (CA)	3	100	NA	NA
Oklahoma City (OK)	61	2000	8	8
Omaha (NE)	9	950	235	12
Philadelphia (PA)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Phoenix (AZ)	150	2800	2350	11
Portland (OR)	88	2216	693	9
Riverside (CA)	75	3000	930	5
Rochester (NY)	20	400	2	2
Sacramento (CA)	61	3900	17	17
San Antonio (TX)	50	2300	NA	NA
San Diego (CA)	38	4912	21	21
San Francisco (CA)	15	1600	NA	NA
San Jose (CA)	50	NA	NA	NA
Santa Ana (CA)	76	8000	16	16
Seattle (WA)	100	800	1083	9
Shreveport (LA)	18	550	NA	NA
St Louis (MO)	33	1200	8	8
St Paul (MN)	25	800	NA	NA
St Petersburg (FL)	NA	NA	125	0
Stockton (CA)	126	2573	798	22
Tampa (FL)	9	181	26	1
Toledo (OH)	19	451	5	5
Tucson (AZ)	70	1377	2607	3
Tulsa (OK)	30	300	NA	NA
Virginia Beach (VA)	8	75	25	0
Wichita (KS)	68	1200	283	14

NA = Information Not Available



Akron (OH) with a newly recognized gang problem, also reports only the number of gang-related homicides for 1991 (40 incidents). San Jose with its computer system can provide only information on the number of gangs. St. Petersburg with a manual record-keeping system provides detailed statistics on incidents, but can produce no estimates of the number of gangs or gang members in the jurisdiction. The departmental representative from Anchorage (Alaska) Police Department suspects the presence of a few "wannabe's" in his jurisdiction and reports that gang members "identified" by external agencies from out-of-state showed up in his jurisdiction in the summers of 1990 and 1991. The fact that these gang members have always left before the arrival of the Alaskan winter have made the need for a comprehensive record-keeping and reporting system unnecessary. Philadelphia, as New York City, reports officially redefining their gang problem to include only oriental gangs, and while an information system is being reconstructed, is unable to provide 1991 statistics on numbers of gangs, gang members, or incidents. Fresno, California, maintains manual records and also can provide no reports on any of the three kinds of requested gang information.

Additional difficulties encountered in reporting on the scope of gang problems vary considerably across cities. In Jacksonville (FL), a shortfall in staffing committed to dealing with gang problems leads the departmental representative to view the compiling of gang information statistics from his units manually maintained files as an inordinate burden. In San Diego, two computers are used to store gang information, but summary reports are extracted from paper files. In Honolulu and Miami, data is input into regional GREAT systems, but the departments themselves do not have the capacity to generate reports. In

Miami, the representative of Metro-Dade Police Department, who generates statistics for the wider Miami area states that Miami Police Department has to his knowledge made no separate request for jurisdiction-level statistics.

### Defining Gang Problems

As noted above Miller (1975) used five criteria to define gangs; Needle and Stapleton (1983), six; and Spergel and Curry (1992), twelve. (Our approach to decomposing gang definitions differs from Spergel and Curry in that we do not attempt to distinguish between general symbols, collective symbols, and personal symbols.) Instead of the open-ended format utilized by earlier studies, we chose a close-ended approach that asked the departmental representative to apply the departmental definition to a list of twenty-five gang characteristics contained in the questionnaire in Appendix D. In a few cases, departmental representatives who did not have time to fill out the definitional questionnaire were simply asked to fax us a copy of their departmental definition. In these cases, at least three coders transferred the definitions into the 25 criteria. In many cases, however, departmental representatives both filled out our questionnaire and furnished us a copy of the departmental definition or other governmental regulation. Official definitions received by the study are listed in Appendix E. Those that were transferred to the survey instrument by the research team are identified.

Of the 72 cities reporting gang problems, 70 completed our survey instrument or supplied us with a copy of an official definition or regulation. The departmental representative from

Akron (OH) Police Department states that their local gang problem has been officially recognized too recently for them to have developed a departmental definition. Norfolk (VA) also did not furnish a definition or complete a definition questionnaire.

From the approaches to categorizing gang definitions, we first choose to utilize the analytic categories suggested by Needle and Stapleton (1983) that they base on Miller's (1975) definition. The five criteria that Needle and Stapleton took from Miller are violent behavior, group organization, leadership, territory, and recurrent interaction. To identify departments using the violent behavior criterion, we tabulate departments that select one or more of our four definitional questionnaire items that identify a gang as a group that attacks (with or without weapons) non-members or members of other groups. The group organization criterion is based on the items on group rules and a group name. Leadership is associated with the single item "has established leaders;" and territory on the item that groups consider "some part (turf or territory) of the community to be theirs exclusively." We classify departments as employing the criterion of recurrent interaction on the basis of our questionnaire items that identify gangs as groups "from the same part of the city" or having "some members who do everything together." The additional criterion that Needle and Stapleton add to Miller's is labeled by them as "dress including body decoration and identifying graffiti". We choose to include these characteristics under the criterion label "symbols" and count police departments as utilizing this definitional criterion if their method of defining gangs includes one or more of the items "wear certain colors," "share a common set of signs and symbols to identify the group," and "writing graffiti." The survey responses

by city for the 72 largest U.S. cities on the six Needle and Stapleton/Miller criteria are shown in Table 7 (on the following pages).

That 25 out of 70 cities agree on the six definitional criteria used by Needle and Stapleton suggests that consensus on what constitutes a gang may have increased over the last decade. In fact, a chi-square test reveals that our 35.7% finding is statistically different from Needle and Stapleton's result at a .001 level of significance. When we examine the 25 departments that share agreement on the six Needle and Stapleton/Miller criteria on some of the additional criteria used by Spergel and Curry, we see that police department consensus on gang definition remains quite limited.

Table 8 and Figure 8 (on following pages) show how the 25 cities sharing the six Needle and Stapleton/Miller criteria break down on selected additional definitional criteria. Clear majorities of the 25 police departments include involvement in property crime (22 or 88%) and involvement in drug sales (23 or 92%) as definitional criteria. Traditional sociological perspectives that are closely linked to process-oriented definitions of gangs such as those offered by Thrasher (1927), Klein (1971), and Hagedorn (1988) are more likely to be absent in any consensus on gang definition.

Of the 25 departments, 18 (72%) include a criteria that gangs are "from the same part of town," and 9 (36%) add to their perspective their criteria that a gang is a "group that engages in non-criminal activities." Jankowski (1991: 29) distinguishes crews from gangs in his suggestion that crews "are organized solely for the purpose of committing crime." Of the 25

Table 7. Definitional Criteria for Gangs for 70 Largest U.S. Cities with Definitions

City	Violent Behavior	Group Organization	Leadership	Recurrent Interaction	Territory	Symbols
Albuquerque (NM)	X	X		X	X	X
Anaheim (CA)	X	X			X	X
Anchorage (AK)		X	X			
Arlington (TX)		X	X			X
Atlanta (GA)	X	X		X	X	X
Aurora (CO)	X	X		X	X	X
Austin (TX)			X	X		X
Baton Rouge (LA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Birmingham (AL)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boston (MA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Buffalo (NY)	X	X	X		X	X
Charlotte (NC)		X		X		X
Chicago (IL)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cincinnati (OH)	X					
Cleveland (OH)	X				X	X
Colorado Springs (CO)	X				X	X
Columbus (OH)		X	X	X	X	X
Corpus Christi (TX)	X	X	X		X	X
Dallas (TX)	X	X				X
Denver (CO)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Detroit (MI)		X	X		X	X
El Paso (TX)	X	X		X	X	X
Fort Worth (TX)	X			X	X	X
Fresno (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Honolulu (HI)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Houston (TX)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Indianapolis (IN)		X				
Jackson (MS)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jacksonville (FL)		X		X		X
Jersey City (NJ)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kansas City (MO)	X	X		X	X	X
Las Vegas (NV)	X	X		X		X
Lexington (KY)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Long Beach (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Los Angeles (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X

x = Criterion Used

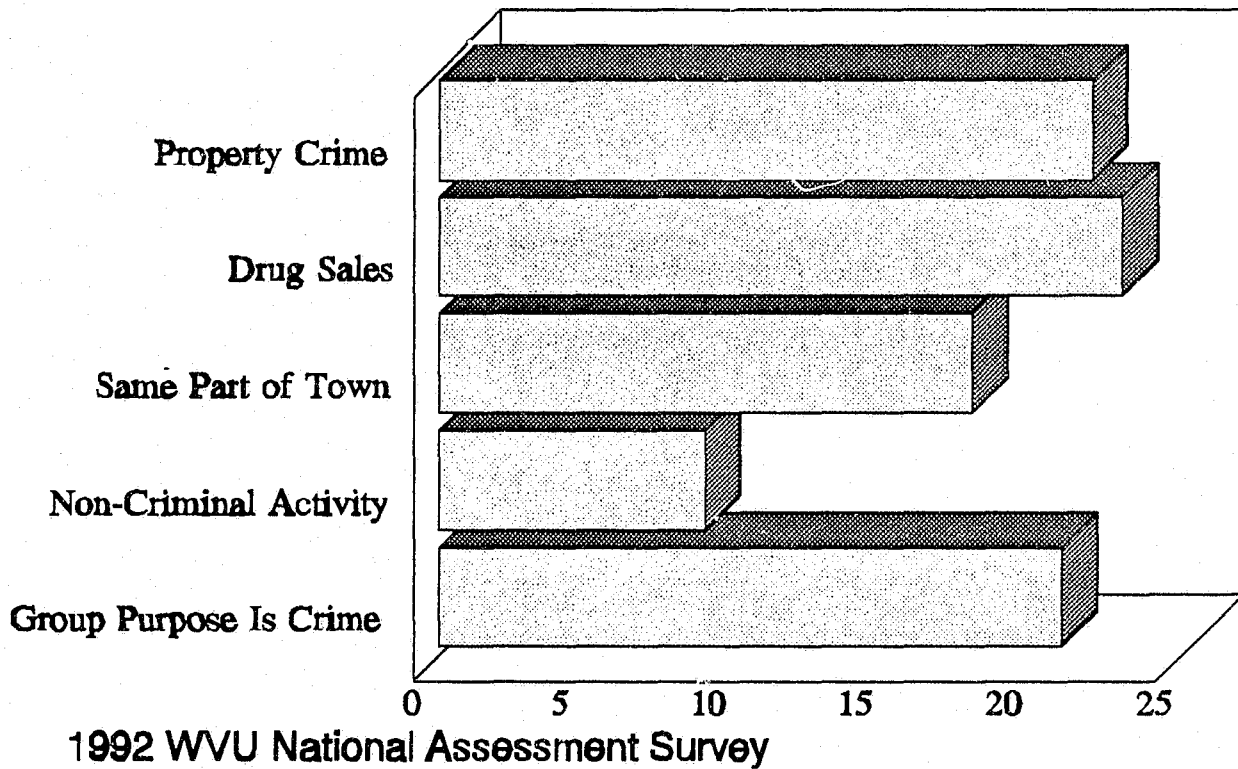
\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\*

Table 7. Definitional Criteria for Gangs for 70 Largest U.S. Cities with Definitions (Continued)

City	Violent Behavior	Group Organization	Leadership	Recurrent Interaction	Territory	Symbols
Louisville (KY)	X	X	X		X	X
Mesa (AZ)	X	X			X	X
Miami (FL)		X		X		X
Milwaukee (WI)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Minneapolis (MN)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mobile (AL)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nashville (TN)	X	X	X	X	X	X
New Orleans (LA)	X		X	X	X	X
New York (NY)	X		X		X	X
Oakland (CA)	X	X	X		X	X
Oklahoma City (OK)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Omaha (NE)	X		X			X
Philadelphia (PA)	X				X	X
Phoenix (AZ)	X	X			X	X
Portland (OR)	X	X	X	X		X
Riverside (CA)	X	X				X
Rochester (NY)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sacramento (CA)		X			X	
San Antonio (TX)	X	X	X		X	X
San Diego (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
San Francisco (CA)	X	X	X		X	X
San Jose (CA)	X	X				X
Santa Ana (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Seattle (WA)	X	X		X	X	X
Shreveport (LA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
St Louis (MO)	X	X	X	X	X	X
St Paul (MN)	X					X
St Petersburg (FL)		X		X		X
Stockton (CA)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tampa (FL)	X	X				X
Toledo (OH)	X				X	X
Tucson (AZ)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tulsa (OK)	X				X	X
Virginia Beach (VA)		X	X		X	X
Wichita (KS)	X	X		X	X	X

X = Criterion Used.

**Figure 8. Additional Definitional Criteria for 25 Cities Sharing All 6 of Needle & Stapleton / Miller Definitional Criteria**



**Table 8. Additional Definitional Criteria for 25 Cities Sharing All 6 of Needle & Stapleton / Miller Definitional Criteria**

Criterion	n	%
Involved in Major Property Crime	22	88.0
Involved in Drug Sales	23	92.0
From Same Part of Town	18	72.0
Engage in Some Non-Criminal Activity	9	36.0
Group Exists for Sole Purpose of Criminal Activity	21	84.0

departments sharing the six Needle and Stapleton/Miller criteria, 21 (84%) also add a version of Jankowski's crew criterion in their use of "a group that exists for the sole purpose of performing criminal acts." Based on these findings, we feel secure in concluding that in 1992, as was found in all prior national surveys, the diversity of gang definitions observed reveals little consensus on what constitutes a gang across law enforcement jurisdictions.

### THE SCOPE OF THE U.S. GANG PROBLEM

Given what is reported above about the availability of gang statistics in large cities at the local level, it seems appropriate to proceed very cautiously in presenting national-level statistics on the gang problem. With this caution in mind, it is possible to present answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about the U.S. gang problem: How many gangs do law enforcement agencies report? How many gang members do law enforcement agencies report? And how many gang incidents do law enforcement agencies report?

For the largest 79 U.S. cities, local law enforcement agencies maintained records for 1991 on at least 3,876 gangs, 202,981 gang members, and 36,265 gang incidents. These statistics do not include data we obtained from selected county jurisdictions and selected city



jurisdictions under 200,000 in population.<sup>4</sup> Information by type of offense where it is available for the 72 largest U.S. cities with reported gang problems is shown in Table 6.

The number of reported gang incidents that are violent in nature is proportionately large, 56.7%, but are reported across a greater number of departments than other kinds of offenses. Most important, however, is the degree to which city police departments are not able to tabulate statistics on numbers of gang-related incidents. As we will argue below, we feel that of the three measures of the scope of gang problems -- gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents, the most relevant from law enforcement, public policy, and social science perspectives is the number and kinds of gang-related incidents.

Another important question emerges when we examine the ratio of gang members to gang incidents at the local level. In 23 of the 26 cities that report both numbers of gang members and numbers of gang incidents (in addition to gang homicides), there are more gang members reported than gang incidents. (For all cities, we phrased our request for the number of gang-related incidents in terms that restricted incidents to criminal acts.) The Los Angeles Police Department reports 503 gangs and 55,258 gang members yet only 8,528 gang-related crimes in 1991. The Chicago Police Department reports that 29,000 gang members in 41 gangs

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to the total numbers of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents reported from large cities, we obtained selected data from 11 county jurisdictions and 29 police departments from cities with populations under 195,000. One of the county jurisdictions is Los Angeles County. We follow the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office (Reiner 1992) estimation that there is a 25% overlap of LA County gang member files that are also included in Los Angeles Police Department records by reducing the number of Los Angeles County gang members by one-fourth. With this adjustment, we find that these jurisdictions maintain records on an additional 1,099 gangs, 49,589 gang members, and 10,094 gang-related incidents. Hence, our conservative estimate of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents as reflected by local police department records for 1991 is 4,881 gangs, 249,324 gang members, and 46,359 gang incidents.

account for only 4,765 gang incidents in 1991. The Louisville Police Department reports 250 gang members in 10 gangs and only one gang-related incident (an assault) in 1991. Only three large city police departments report more gang-related incidents than gang members -- Denver (5,100 members, 6,109 incidents), Seattle (800 members, 1,083 incidents), and Tucson (1,377 members, 2,607 incidents). In none of these three cities, does the number of incidents in 1991 per member exceed two incidents per member.

### **A LAW ENFORCEMENT SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHY OF THE LARGE CITY GANG PROBLEM**

Limitations in the availability of data on the scope of local gang problems noted above must be kept in mind in addressing other questions about the changing dynamics of gang-related crime as a social as well as law enforcement problem. Particular policy related questions include (1) the degree to which the nation's gang population involves adult gang members; (2) the extent to which females are involved in gang-related criminal activity; (3) the racial and ethnic composition of gang membership; and (4) the emergence of gang problems among newly arrived immigrant groups.

#### **Adults and Gangs**

Hagedorn (1988) argues that a depressed national economy with especially debilitating effects on the job opportunities of inner-city minority males diminishes the likelihood that gang members will "age out" of gang-involvement in ways described by earlier researchers

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

(Spergel, 1964). William Julius Wilson (1987), in his portrait of the U.S. underclass characterizes these inner-city males as not "marriageable" due in particular to their lack of opportunity for employment and their increased probability of having a criminal record. These young adult males, according to Hagedorn, have few social alternatives other than to continue their association with their gangs in to adulthood. Whyte's (1943) *Corner Boys* living their young adulthoods in the Great Depression demonstrated a similar lingering tie to the group with which they affiliated in adolescence.

Of the 72 largest city police departments reporting the presence of gang problems, 71 (98.6%) report maintaining information on gang members, but, as we noted above, considerably less are able to provide annual reports on the numbers of gang members and gang incidents (27 or 37.5%). Only eight (11.1%) large city police departments (displayed in Table 8 on the following page) of the 72 reporting gang problems can provide statistics on the number of gang incidents within their jurisdictions broken down by juveniles and adults. Of these, one, Ft. Worth (TX), reports this breakdown for only gang-related homicides (2 homicides, 1 adult, 1 juvenile). Another, Rochester (NY), reports only information on homicide when reporting gang incidents (2 are reported), but lists 75 gang-related adult incidents and 75 gang-related youth incidents when asked for the adult-juvenile breakdown.. As Table 8a also shows an additional 16 (22%) departments offer estimates of the percentages for the juvenile-adult breakdown. There is a wide difference in the reported portion of gang-related crime that is attributed to juveniles or adults across cities. At one extreme are three southern cities with relatively recent gang problems. Mobile (AL) and Arlington (TX) each

report gang problems for which 90% of gang-related crimes are attributed to juveniles.

Lexington (KY) attributes 80% of its gang-related crime to juveniles. The gang crime problem in Mobile is reported to have begun in 1988; the problem in Arlington, in 1989; and the problem in Lexington, in 1990.

**Table 8a. Largest City Jurisdictions Maintaining Gang Incident Records by Juveniles & Adults (n = 24)**

City	# Juvenile Incidents	Percent Total	# Adult Incidents	Percent Total
Albuquerque	n/a	60	n/a	40
Anaheim	n/a	50	n/a	50
Arlington	n/a	90	n/a	10
Aurora	n/a	73	n/a	27
Chicago	3,236	26	9,104	74
Cleveland	n/a	45	n/a	55
Dallas*	525	32	698	42
Fort Worth	1	50	1	50
Jackson	n/a	70	n/a	30
Lexington	n/a	80	n/a	20
Long Beach	182	60	122	40
Mesa	n/a	75	n/a	25
Milwaukee	n/a	75	n/a	25
Mobile	1,620	90	180	10
Riverside	n/a	70	n/a	30
Rochester	75	50	75	50
Santa Ana	n/a	20	n/a	80
St. Louis	n/a	35	n/a	65
St. Paul	n/a	40	n/a	60
Stockton	400	50	400	50
Tampa	20	80	5	20
Toledo	n/a	55	n/a	45
Tucson	n/a	60	n/a	40
Wichita	n/a	60	n/a	40

\* In addition to the numbers reported in the table, Dallas also reports 425 (26%) gang incidents that were attributed to "unknown."

The current Chicago gang problem is reported by the Chicago Police Department gang unit to have begun in 1964, and 74% of Chicago gang-related crimes are attributed to adult gang members. Santa Ana's (CA) problem is dated at 1970, and the Santa Ana estimate of 80% of gang-related incidents attributed to adults is the highest reported in the study. Still, the most glaring finding is the degree to which this kind of information is not available.

### Females and Gangs

In her *Girls in the Gang*, Ann Campbell (1984) hypothesized the role of females in gangs to be in a process of change. In the past, females had been involved in gang activities in a marginal way with their affiliation based solely on relationships (eg. sister, girlfriend) to male gang members. Though Campbell (p. 32) suggests that females develop initial ties to gangs through relationships with male members, she sees a "visible solidarity and sisterhood" developing among female gang members. Such processes of interaction that extend beyond valuation by males can serve as a basis for the formation of independent female gangs and gang-related criminal activity (Hagedorn 1988; Campbell 1990; Candamil 1991; Moore 1992).

Specific policy decisions by law enforcement agencies remain a major factor in the construction of the dimensions of gender as part of the national gang problem as perceived by law enforcement agencies. In a number of cities, females are as a matter of policy never classified as gang members. In other jurisdictions, females are relegated statistically to the status of "associate" members. In all, 23 (31.9%) of the largest city police departments with reported gang crime problems do not report statistics on female gang members, and 9 (12.5%)

more report no female gang members. Among those departments reporting no records on female gang members, Aurora (CO) attributes two drive-by shootings to females; and Birmingham (AL) reports 2 independent female gangs, Portland (OR) 1, St. Paul (MN) 3, and Wichita (KS) 3. Table 9 on the following page displays number of female gang members, female offenses by type of incident, and number of independent female gangs for police departments that report these statistics. Forty large city police departments report a total of 7,205 female gang members. Twenty-seven cities report the presence of 83 independent female gangs.

**Table 9. Number of Female Gang Members, Female Offenses by Type of Incident, and Number of Independent Female Gangs for Largest City Jurisdictions (n = 40).**

City	Number of Each Offense Type						Female Gangs	
	Homicide	Other Violent	Property	Drug - Related	Vice	Other	Number Members	Number Gangs
Albuquerque	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	200	n/a
Anaheim	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	30	2
Arlington	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	n/a
Atlanta	0	3	1	7	0	0	6	3
Boston	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	60	5
Buffalo	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	n/a
Cleveland	0	12	0	5	n/a	n/a	75	n/a
Colorado Springs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	2
Corpus Christi	0	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	35	n/a
Dallas	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	476	n/a
Denver	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	500	n/a
Detroit	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	5
El Paso	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	342	5
Fort Worth	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a
Houston	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	n/a
Indianapolis	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	4
Jackson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	60	n/a
Jersey City	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	100	2
Lexington	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	1
Long Beach	4	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	861	n/a
Los Angeles	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3,419	8
Louisville	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	n/a
Mesa	1	0	0	0	n/a	0	5	n/a
Milwaukee	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	2
Mobile	0	16	71	3	n/a	11	150	n/a
New Orleans	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	1
Norfolk	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20	n/a
Oakland	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	10
Riverside	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	200	7
Rochester	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20	1
San Antonio	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	n/a
San Diego	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	91	n/a
San Francisco	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	30	n/a
Seattle	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	40	2
Shreveport	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	n/a
Stockton	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	18	2
Tampa	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	n/a
Toledo	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	1
Tucson	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	2
Virginia Beach	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a

### Race, Ethnicity, and Gangs

Gang researchers in the earlier half of the twentieth century (Thrasher 1927; Shaw and McKay 1972), saw gang involvement in criminal activity mostly as a social phenomenon associated with "ethnic" Americans, most commonly second-generation white immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe and African-Americans recently arrived from the Deep South. The way in which Cholo identity has been a factor in the development of Mexican-American gangs and in the development of societal reaction to them is described by Moore (1988) and Vigil (1990). The integration of the pattern of gang formation with other community organizations in Oriental communities (Chin 1990; Fagan *et al.* 1992) suggests the existence of social processes distinctly different from that found in other kinds of ethnic communities. Knox (1991), citing the work of Hagedorn, argues that racism must be regarded as a major causal factor in the etiology of African-American gangs and other researchers (Goldstein 1991; Curry and Spergel 1992) suggest that racism must be considered as at least one factor associated with individual-level gang involvement among African-American adolescents. Yet in the sixties, Miller (1969) found evidence for the continued existence of gang involvement among white youths and from his research that specifically includes a representative number of ethnic white gangs, Jankowski (1991) finds elements of social dynamics and social structure that are common across these gangs and African-American and Latino gangs.

Of the 72 large city police departments reporting the presence of gang crime problems, 71 (98.6%) state that they record the race or ethnicity of gang members. Of these 34 (47.9%)



report that race and ethnic data are maintained on gang members. As with other types of data noted above, maintaining and being able to report are different kinds of activity. Of the 34 police departments, 24 (70.6%) provided specific numbers on gang members by ethnicity.

Table 10 displays these data.

**Table 10. Ethnicity of Gang Members for 26 Large City Police Jurisdictions**

City	# White	# Black	# Hispanic	# Asian	Totals
Anaheim	40	40	680	40	800
Atlanta	0	400	0	156	556
Chicago	2,900	15,660	9,860	680	29,100
Colorado Springs	113	365	145	6	629
Corpus Christi	80	150	350	0	580
Denver	570	3,285	1,294	0	5,149
Detroit	30	415	100	0	545
Fresno	61	480	850	800	2,191
Honolulu	80	19	2	508	609
Houston	75	608	338	27	1048
Jackson*	150	0	0	0	150
Jersey City	112	450	0	317	879
Long Beach	355	4,010	5,263	1,245	10,873
Los Angeles**	278	20,948	31,997	2,175	56,174
Mesa	65	199	254	0	518
Minneapolis	100	5,200	0	565	5,865
Mobile	270	2,700	0	30	3,000
New Orleans	12	226	11	0	249
Oklahoma City***	4	47	8	2	61
Phoenix	2	1,800	52	1	1,855
Rochester	26	247	45	45	363
Sacramento	75	1,350	880	550	2,855
San Diego	0	1682	2095	802	4,739*
Stockton	18	547	1,201	736	2,502
Toledo	44	362	45	0	451
Tucson	80	554	701	13	1,377*
Totals	5,540	61,744	56,171	8,698	131,753

\* Jackson (MS) records statistics on race and ethnicity in 1990 for all groups, but only the number of white gang members for 1991.

\*\* Total for Los Angeles (CA) includes members from other ethnicities.

\*\*\* Data for Oklahoma City (OK) is based on gang "sets", not individual members.

One city, Dallas (TX), is able to report 1990 statistics on gang membership by race and ethnicity, but not similar statistics for 1991. Another city, Jackson (MS), provides statistics on member race and ethnicity for 1990 for all groups, but only the number of white gang members for 1991. Oklahoma City (OK) provides data on numbers of gang "sets" by race and ethnicity. Figure 9 summarizes the data on race and ethnicity.

Only 9 departments report statistics on gang member ethnicity for 1990 and 1991. One of these, Detroit (MI), reports exactly the same numbers in every racial or ethnic category for 1990 and 1991. Table 11 shows the reported numbers for these nine cities and the percentage of change by each category. The changes for percent white are also calculated for Jackson (MS) and Denver (CO). Numbers of gang members are increasing for all ethnic categories in all of the cities for which data is available with the exception of African-American gang members in Toledo (OH) which shows an 8.4% decrease between 1990 and 1991. From the nine cities providing 1990 and 1991 data on all groups and the two additional cities for white youths, Table 12 and Figure 10 are generated. For this limited number of cities, it is possible to see what kind of statistics could be produced about the national gang problem if better data were available. For these cities alone, white gang members remain the smallest category but show the largest proportional growth with a 61.7% increase. For Los Angeles, these numbers do not include "stoners" (698 in 1990 and 776 in 1991), a category for which at least some portion are white. In terms of fewer numbers but a greater rate of increase, Asian gangs rank second with a 34% increase. If data were available on a greater number of cities, these results could merit special attention.

Departments unable to provide specific numbers of gang members by ethnicity were invited to provide percentage estimates. As listed in Table 13, twenty-one additional cities offer such estimates. Three more including Akron (OH), New York City (NY) and San Jose (CA) offer estimates for single ethnic groups. The Akron Police Department offers an estimate for percentage of whites. As noted above, New York City (NY), has recently officially defined its gang problem to be limited to its Asian communities, as has Philadelphia (PA). In concord with this policy decision, the estimate for 1991 New York City gang membership is 95% Asian. San Jose (CA) simply estimates gang membership within its jurisdiction to be 60% Mexican-American. Oklahoma City (OK) bases its estimates on gang "set" composition. Variation across the nation is considerable but not unexpected. With few exceptions to be noted below, the estimate for black gang members pertains to African-Americans only.

Figure 9.  
Distribution of Major Ethnic Groups  
in 24 Large Cities - 1991

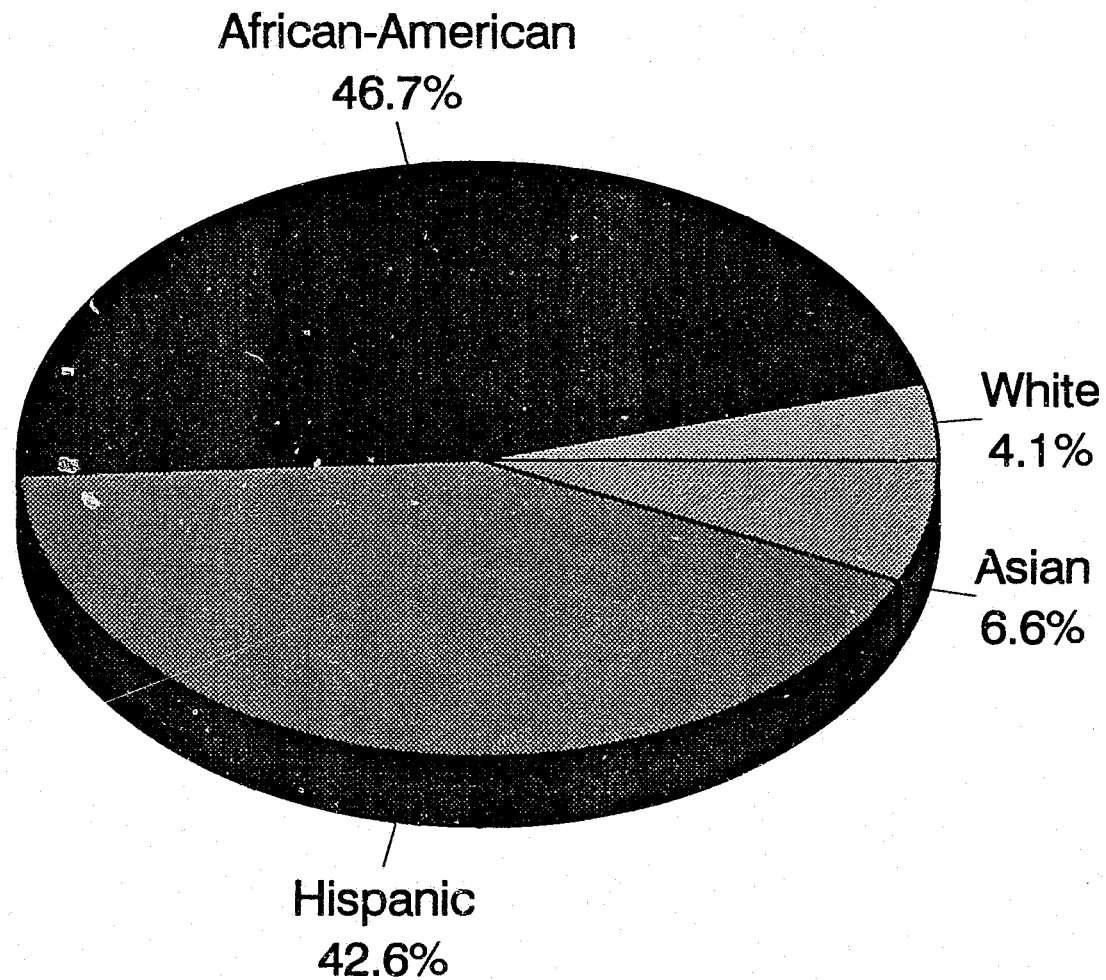
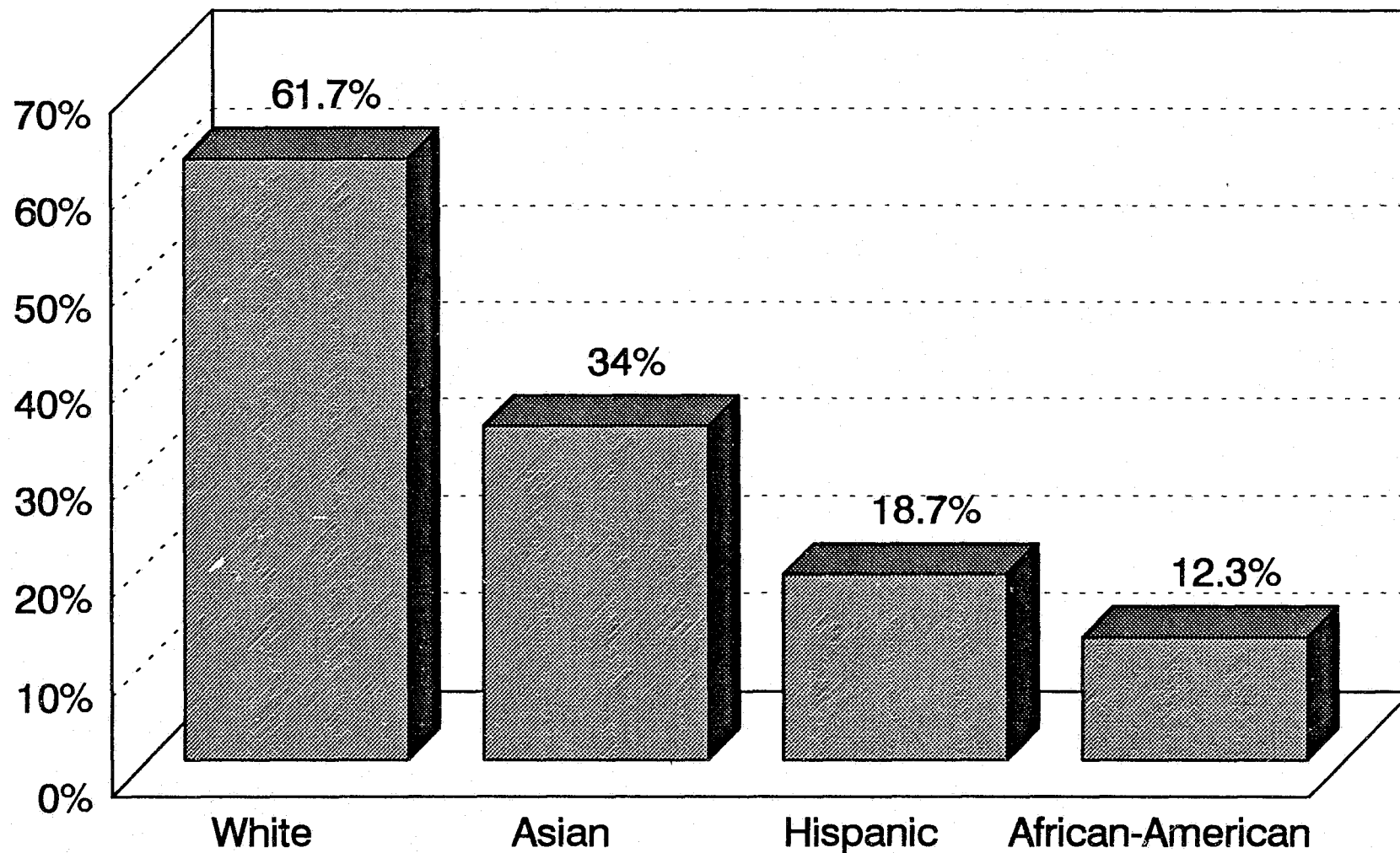


Figure 10. Rate of Increase in Major Ethnic Groups for 11 Large Cities - 1991



**Table 11. Large City Changes for Gang Members By Major Ethnic Groups 1990 - 1991**

City	# White 1990	# White 1991	% Change	# Black 1990	# Black 1991	% Change	# Hispanic 1990	# Hispanic 1991	% Change	# Asian 1990	# Asian 1991	% Change
Denver (CO)	270	570	111.1	2,701	3,285	55.9	598	1,294	116.4	0	0	n/a
Detroit (MI)	30	30	0	415	415	0	100	100	0	0	0	n/a
Fresno (CA)	50	61	22	340	480	41.2	500	850	70	325	800	146.2
Jackson (MS)	100	150	50	1600	1600	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
Jersey City (NJ)	90	112	24.4	350	450	28.6	80	88	10	145	317	118.6
Los Angeles (CA)	153	278	81.7	19,238	20,948	8.9	27,762	31,997	15.3	1,964	2,175	10.7
Mesa (AZ)	25	65	160	63	199	215.9	158	254	60.8	0	0	n/a
Minneapolis (MN)	50	100	100	5,000	5,200	4	0	0	n/a	350	565	61.4
Mobile (AL)	250	270	8	2,200	2,700	21.6	0	0	n/a	30	30	0
Stockton (CA)	15	18	20	486	547	12.6	966	1,201	24.3	635	736	15.9
Toledo (OH)	17	44	158.8	395	362	- 8.4	32	45	40.6	0	0	n/a

**Table 12. Increases in Gang Members for 11 Cities**

Ethnicity	Total # 1990	% of Total	Total # 1991	% of Total	Percent Change
White	1,050	1.6	1,698	2.2	61.7
African-American	32,214	48.1	36,186	46.2	12.3
Hispanic	30,196	45.1	35,829	45.7	18.7
Asian	3,449	5.2	4,623	5.9	34.0
		100.0		100.0	

For Los Angeles, these numbers do not include "stoners" (698 in 1990 and 776 in 1991), a category for which at least some portion are white. In terms of fewer numbers but a greater rate of increase, Asian gangs rank second with a 34% increase. If data were available on a greater number of cities, these results could merit special attention.

Departments unable to provide specific numbers of gang members by ethnicity were invited to provide percentage estimates. As listed in Table 13 below, 21 additional cities offer such estimates.

**Table 13. Percentage Estimates of Gang Member Ethnicity by 21 Large City Jurisdictions**

City	% Estimate White	% Estimate African-American	% Estimate Hispanic	% Estimate Asian
Albuquerque (NM)	9	15	75	1
Arlington (TX)	5	30	50	15
Aurora (CO)	10	90	0	0
Birmingham (AL)	20	80	0	0
Boston (MA)	3	84	0	13
Buffalo (NY)	0	100	0	0
Charlotte (NC)	0	90	5	0
Cincinnati (OH)	14	85	0	1
Cleveland (OH)	10	75	15	0
El Paso (TX)	24	8	67	1
Fort Worth (TX)	10	40	40	10
Indianapolis (IN)	48	52	0	0
Louisville (KY)	10	89	0	1
Milwaukee (WI)	4	80	15	1
Oakland (CA)	5	40	20	35
Riverside (CA)	3	37	57	2
Santa Ana (CA)	5	5	75	10
Shreveport (LA)	4	96	0	0
St. Louis (MO)	5	91	0	4
St. Paul (MN)	15	60	10	15
Tampa (FL)	25	25	50	0

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

Three more Akron, New York City and San Jose offer estimates for single ethnic groups. Akron Police Department offers an estimate for percentage whites. As noted above, New York City, as Philadelphia, has recently officially defined its gang problem to be limited to its Asian communities. In concord with this policy decision, the estimate for 1991 for New York City gang membership is 95% Asian. San Jose simply estimates gang membership within its jurisdiction to be 60% Mexican-American. Oklahoma City bases its estimates on gang "set" composition. Variation across the nation is considerable but not unexpected. With few exceptions to be noted below, the estimate for black gang members pertains to African-Americans only.

#### **New Immigrant Involvement in Gangs**

The Department of Health and Human Services has recently focused special attention on the emergence of gang problems among newly arrived immigrant groups such as refugees from Southeast Asia (Vigil and Yun, 1990) and Central America (Cardenas *et al.* 1992). Changes in levels of conflict in U.S. Chinatowns has been attributed to the arrival of new waves of uniquely deprived immigrant groups (Fagan *et al.* 1992).

A number of cities reporting ethnicity data supply numbers or estimates that can interpreted to be indicative of gang problems involving newly arrived immigrant populations. Table 14 shows cities and numbers and percentages or estimated percentages of the total gang member problem by selected ethnic categories as these statistics were provided to the survey.



**Table 14. Ethnic Data on New Immigrant Gangs in Selected Large City Jurisdictions**

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Year, Number (Percent)</u>
Jamaican	Buffalo (NY)	10%
	Minneapolis (MN)	1990 30 (0.6%); 1991 70 (1.3%)
	St. Louis (MO)	1%
Haitian	Boston (MA)	2%
Other Hispanic	Corpus Christi (TX)	120 (20.7%)
	Tampa (FL)	50%
Vietnamese	Anaheim (CA)	40 (5%)
	Arlington (TX)	15%
	Atlanta (GA)	100 (18%)
	Boston (MA)	5%
	Fresno (CA)	1990 25 (2.1%); 1991 75 (3.4%)
	Jersey City (NJ)	1990 60 (9%); 1991 140 (15.9%)
	Milwaukee (WI)	1%
	Oakland (CA)	10%
	Riverside (CA)	2%
	Rochester (NY)	45 (12.4%)
	St. Louis (MO)	2%
Filipino	Honolulu (HI)	508 (46.1%)
	Jersey City (NJ)	1990 40 (6%); 1991 92 (10.5%)
	San Diego (CA)	517 (10.9%)
	Stockton (CA)	1990 193 (9.2%); 1991 211 (8.4%)
Cambodian	Boston (MA)	1%
	Cincinnati (OH)	1%
	Fresno (CA)	1990 50 (1%); 1991 150 (6.8%)
	Minneapolis (MN)	1990 50 (1%); 1991 100 (1.7%)
	Oakland (CA)	15%
Lao	Fresno (CA)	1990 100 (8.2%); 1991 200 (9.1%)
	Honolulu (HI)	5 (0.5%)
	Minneapolis (MN)	1990 100 (1.9%); 1991 175 (3%)
	St. Louis (MO)	2%
Hmong	Fresno (CA)	1990 150 (12.3%); 1991 375 (17.1%)
	Minneapolis (MN)	1990 190 (3.5%); 1991 200 (3.4%)
Samoan	Honolulu (HI)	212 (19.3%)
Other Asian	Mixed	
	Atlanta (GA)	56 (10.1%)
	Japanese - Korean	
	El Paso (TX)	0.5%
	Honolulu (HI)	18 (1.6%)
Japanese		
Honolulu (HI)	26 (2.4%)	
Korean		
Honolulu (HI)	24 (2.2%)	
Tongan		
Honolulu (HI)	24 (2.2%)	

The statistics in Table 14 on Jamaicans do not include a number of Jamaicans who were counted as members of posses in cities where those numbers are kept separately from statistics on gangs. Still, Buffalo (NY) attributes 10% of its gang population to Jamaicans. The only other black ethnicity cited besides African-Americans (discussed above) are Haitians to whom Boston attributes 2% of its gang member population. Of cities with large Cuban immigrant populations, only Tampa (FL) provided the survey with ethnicity information estimating 50% of its gang membership population to be "Hispanic". Dade County, who provide precise statistical information for the metropolitan Dade area incorporating Miami list Cubans, 9.33%; Nicaraguans, 1.81%; Colombians, 1.13%; and "other Hispanics," 3.06%.

In terms of number of jurisdictions citing, Vietnamese gang members are most widely distributed, being listed by 11 large city police departments that include the Northeast (Boston, Rochester, and Jersey City), South (Atlanta and Arlington, TX), Midwest (Milwaukee and St. Louis), and California (Anaheim, Fresno, Oakland, and Riverside). Other Southeast Asian ethnic groups appear in departmental statistics from a diversity of cities -- Cambodians in Boston, Cincinnati, Fresno, Minneapolis, and Oakland; Lao in Fresno, Minneapolis, and St. Louis; and Hmong in Minneapolis and Fresno.

Filipinos constitute the largest ethnic group identified as involved in gangs in Honolulu (508, 46.1%). San Diego also reports a relatively large Filipino gang population (517, 10.9%) with Filipino gang members additionally being reported in Stockton (CA) (211, 8.4%) and Jersey City (92, 10.5%). Honolulu also lists Samoan (212, 19.3%), Tongan (24, 2.2%), Japanese (18, 1.6%), and Korean (26, 2.4%) gang members.

**THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE**

Spergel and Curry (1990) examined the extent of formalization involved in potential model community-level responses to gang problems in the 1987 National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program survey. In the initial screening of police departments in the National Assessment Survey, each departmental representative in the 72 cities where gang crime problems were reported was asked if there existed in the department a special unit for dealing with gang problems. Of the 72 departments reporting gang crime problems, 53 (73.6%) report the existence of such specialized gang units. All of these respondents were sent a set of additional questionnaires soliciting information on unit characteristics and policies, communication linkages with other agencies at the national and local level, and any external funding. Five departments did not complete any of these questionnaires. In every case, respondents were called repeatedly; and, in every case, the reason given for not completing the survey was that they had to fill out too many surveys in 1992 already and simply did not have the time to participate in additional research efforts. Police departments not participating in this part of the study are Austin (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Miami (FL), and San Antonio (TX). New York City's gang unit is in a process of reorganizing and refocusing on the Oriental gang problem only and expressed an unreadiness to participate in this part of the study. The respondent from Buffalo (NY) Police Department is unsure of the year in which the department's gang unit came into being or if there are any existing written policies in the department on dealing with gang-related crimes. Respondents from the police departments in Detroit (MI), New York City (NY), Philadelphia (PA), and Portland (OR) did not provide number of personnel assigned to their specialized gang units.

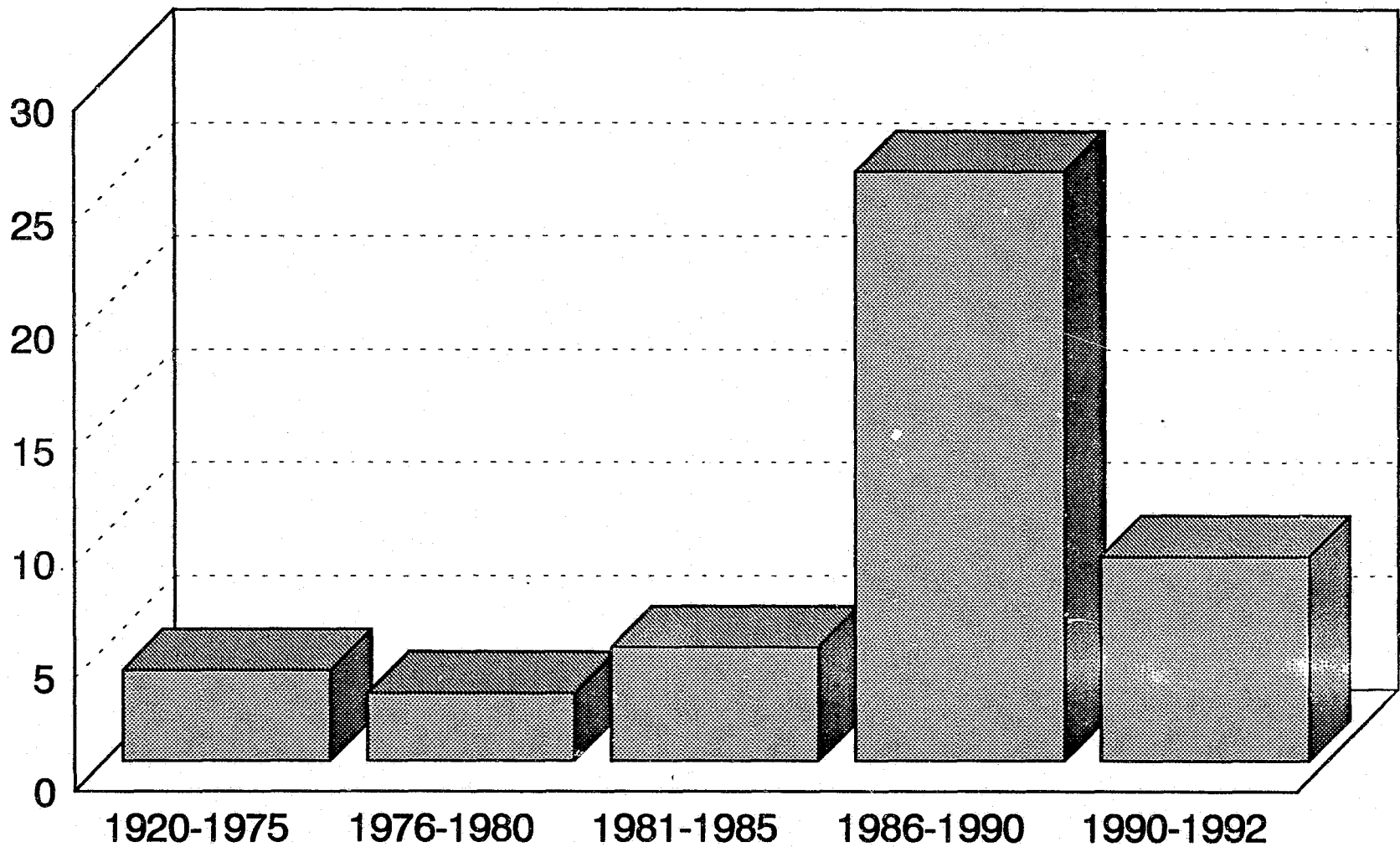
Table 15 (following page) shows the available data on gang unit establishment and size of the gang unit in terms of assigned personnel for the 48 departments reporting information on their specialized gang units. The age and size of specialized local police department units constitutes a history of organized law enforcement reaction to gang-related crime problems in the largest U.S. cities. As organizations, gang units range from one assigned officer in the units in Virginia Beach (VA) established in 1988 and Mesa (AZ) established in 1989 to the 432-person unit in Chicago and 200-person unit in Los Angeles. Los Angeles Police Department's gang unit traces its establishment to 1920, while Chicago Police Department traces its gang unit back to 1967. Three departments in Colorado Springs (CO), Oklahoma City (OK), and Tulsa (OK) report establishing programs in the first months of 1992. The median unit size is ten personnel. Ten departmental units (22.2%) have twenty or more assigned personnel. Table 16 and Figure 11 show gang unit establishment by five-year intervals since 1975. Over half of the 47 gang units providing information were created in the five-year period from 1986 to 1990. Another nine (19.1%) have been created since 1990.

**Table 16. Establishment of Gang Units in 5 Year Intervals**

Intervals	Number	Percent
1920 to 1975	4	8.5%
1976 thru 1980	3	6.4%
1981 thru 1985	5	10.6%
1986 thru 1990	26	55.3%
1991 thru 1992	9	19.1%

In all, we have data on reported gang policy responses from 48 (90.6%) of the 53 large city police departments with specialized gang units. Table 17 shows the available data on gang policy responses for these 48 departments. The presence of each policy response across

**Figure 11. Establishment of Specialized Gang Units by Five-Year Intervals Since 1975**



1992 WVU National Assessment Survey

**Table 15. Policy Response Data for 54 Large City Gang Units**

City	Year Gang Unit Founded	# Members in Gang Unit
Albuquerque (NM)	1989	9
Anaheim (CA)	1991	7
Aurora (CO)	1989	13
Baton Rouge (LA)	1991	20
Birmingham (AL)	1989	4
Boston (MA)	1987	40
Buffalo (NY)	n/a	8
Chicago (IL)	1967	462
Cleveland (OH)	1990	10
Colorado Springs (CO)	1992	25
Corpus Christi (TX)	1991	11
Dallas (TX)	1989	19
Denver (CO)	1986	50
Detroit (MI)	1976	n/a
El Paso (TX)	1990	27
Fort Worth (TX)	1983	17
Fresno (CA)	1988	8
Honolulu (HI)	1985	8
Indianapolis (IN)	1988	10
Jersey City (NJ)	1990	4
Long Beach (CA)	1981	3
Los Angeles (CA)	1920	200
Mesa (AZ)	1989	1
Milwaukee (WI)	1982	14
Minneapolis (MN)	1986	4
Mobile (AL)	1990	4
Norfolk (VA)	1989	4
Oakland (CA)	1991	5
Oklahoma City (OK)	1992	39
Omaha (NE)	1988	10
Philadelphia (PA)	1961	n/a
Phoenix (AZ)	1978	16
Portland (OR)	1988	n/a
Riverside (CA)	1988	7
Sacramento (CA)	1981	6
San Diego (CA)	1989	29
San Francisco (CA)	1977	17
San Jose (CA)	1986	15
Santa Ana (CA)	1970	8
Seattle (WA)	1990	32
St. Louis (MO)	1991	5
St. Paul (MN)	1990	4
Stockton (CA)	1989	5
Tampa (FL)	1991	4
Tucson (AZ)	1989	11
Tulsa (OK)	1992	2
Virginia Beach (VA)	1988	1
Wichita (KS)	1990	16

all units is shown in Table 18 below. Specialized training is available in 41 (85.4%) of the departments, special departmental policies in 35 (72.9%), written departmental policies in 25 (52.1%), and special laws in 30 jurisdictions (62.5%). Only one unit, that in Detroit (MI), reports having undertaken none of the four policy responses. Four units -- those in Buffalo (NY), Jersey City (NJ), Mesa (AZ), and Virginia Beach (VA) -- report only having specialized gang training available. Two -- Birmingham (AL) and Boston (MA) -- report only unwritten special policies for gang-related crimes. Mobile (AL) has only a written specialized policy. Five cities -- Cleveland (OH), Honolulu (HI), Milwaukee (WI), Oklahoma City (OK), and Seattle (WA) -- have training available and a non-written specialized policy. Units in five cities -- Albuquerque (NM), Corpus Christi (TX), Fresno (CA), Omaha (NE), and St. Louis (MO) -- have training and written departmental policies. San Diego (CA) reports a non-written specialized policy and the presence of specialized laws to deal with gang-related crimes.

**Table 18. Gang Policy Response Across Large City Gang Units**

Policy Response	Number	Percent
Training Available	41	85.4%
Special Policy	35	72.9%
Policy in Writing	25	52.1%
Special Laws	30	62.5%

Units in eight cities -- Anaheim (CA), Indianapolis (IN), Norfolk (VA), Oakland (CA), Philadelphia (PA), Sacramento (CA), Santa Ana (CA), and Tulsa (OK) -- report having training and specialized laws but no special unit policies.

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

Table 17. Characteristics of 54 Large City Gang Units

City	Unit Training?	Special Policies?	Policies Written?	Special Laws?
Albuquerque (NM)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Anaheim (CA)	Yes	No	No	Yes
Aurora (CO)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Austin (TX)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Baton Rouge (LA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Birmingham (AL)	No	Yes	No	No
Boston (MA)	No	Yes	No	No
Buffalo (NY)	Yes	No	Not Sure	Not Sure
Chicago (IL)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Cleveland (OH)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Colorado Springs (CO)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Corpus Christi (TX)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dallas (TX)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Denver (CO)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Detroit (MI)	No	No	n/a	No
El Paso (TX)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fort Worth (TX)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fresno (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Honolulu (HI)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Indianapolis (IN)	Yes	No	n/a	Yes
Jersey City (NJ)	Yes	No	No	No
Kansas City (MO)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Las Vegas (NV)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Long Beach (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Los Angeles (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mesa (AZ)	Yes	No	n/a	No
Miami (FL)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Milwaukee (WI)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Minneapolis (MN)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mobile (AL)	No	Yes	Yes	No
New York (NY)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Norfolk (VA)	Yes	n/a	n/a	Yes
Oakland (CA)	Yes	No	No	Yes
Oklahoma City (OK)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Omaha (NE)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Philadelphia (PA)	Yes	No	No	Yes
Phoenix (AZ)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portland (OR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a
Riverside (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sacramento (CA)	Yes	No	No	Yes
San Antonio (TX)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
San Diego (CA)	No	Yes	No	Yes
San Francisco (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
San Jose (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Santa Ana (CA)	Yes	No	No	Yes
Seattle (WA)	Yes	Yes	No	No
St. Louis (MO)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
St. Paul (MN)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Stockton (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tampa (FL)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tucson (AZ)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tulsa (OK)	Yes	No	No	Yes
Virginia Beach (VA)	Yes	No	No	No
Wichita (KS)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Two more units -- Chicago (IL) and St. Paul (MN) -- report available training, non-written departmental policy, and jurisdiction-level laws for dealing with gang-related crimes. For these three latter groups of eleven cities, it may be that the existence of specialized laws for the jurisdiction supersedes the need for written formal policy at the department level. The 17 (23.6%) remaining departments report the presence of all four levels of gang policy response.

### INTER-AGENCY COMMUNICATION LINKAGES

In their analysis of community-level networks, Curry and Thomas (1992) found that network structure variables account for statistically significant proportions of the variation in the distribution of formal gang policy response. Survey instruments soliciting data on each local police department's information-sharing contacts at the national and local levels were sent to departments with specialized gang units. Of particular interest in this part of the research is the degree to which information is shared across cities and across agencies within the same communities. Extensive network linkages between police departments in different cities has been suggested by some researchers. For example, in dealing with the hypothesis that gang members migrate between cities to create "satellite" gangs, Hagedorn (1988: 55) states, "We have more documentation of Chicago police traveling from city to city agitating for a certain type of response to gangs, than we have documentation of traveling gang organizers."

The respondents from Austin (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Miami (FL), and San Antonio (TX) who did not complete the policy response questionnaires as noted above were joined by Aurora (CO), Detroit (MI), Los Angeles (CA), Philadelphia (PA), and Tulsa (OK) in not completing the network questionnaires. Cross-agency linkages representing the reported sharing of information on youth gangs for the 44 (83%) gang units completing the survey is shown in Table 19 on the following page. The distribution of each kind of linkage for all 44 departments is displayed in Table 20.

Table 19. Inter-Agency Linkages for 44 Large Cities

City	FBI	ATF	DEA	State Agencies	DHHS	Other Police Departments	Other Local Agencies
Albuquerque (NM)	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Anaheim (CA)	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Baton Rouge (LA)	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Birmingham (AL)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Boston (MA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Buffalo (NY)	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Chicago (IL)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Cleveland (OH)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Colorado Springs (CO)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Corpus Christi (TX)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Dallas (TX)	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Denver (CO)	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
El Paso (TX)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Fort Worth (TX)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Fresno (CA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Honolulu (HI)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Indianapolis (IN)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Jersey City (NJ)	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Long Beach (CA)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Mesa (AZ)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Milwaukee (WI)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Minneapolis (MN)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Mobile (AL)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
New York (NY)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Norfolk (VA)	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Oakland (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma City (OK)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Omaha (NE)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Phoenix (AZ)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Portland (OR)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Riverside (CA)	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Sacramento (CA)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
San Diego (CA)	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
San Francisco (CA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
San Jose (CA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Santa Ana (CA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Seattle (WA)	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
St. Louis (MO)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
St. Paul (MN)	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Stockton (CA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Tampa (FL)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Tucson (AZ)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Virginia Beach (VA)	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Wichita (KS)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

By far the most common sharing of information reported occurs between local police department gang units and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Either national or local contact with the FBI is reported by 36 (81.8%) of the respondents. Sharing of information with other local agencies ranging from prosecutor's offices, corrections, and parole to local schools and social service agencies is the next most frequently reported kind of network link, reported by 22 (50%) of the respondents. Contact between local gang units and representatives of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is the third most commonly reported information-sharing link (10 units, 22.7%).

**Table 20. Distribution of Network Linkages for Large Cities**

Agency	Number	Percent
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)	36	81.8%
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)	21	47.7%
Administration for Children & Families (DHHS)	4	9.1%
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)	10	22.7%
Local Agencies	22	50.0%
Other Law Enforcement Agencies	16	36.4%
State or Regional Organization	13	29.5%

Law enforcement agency sharing of information across jurisdictions is reported by only 16 (36.4%) of the respondents. Communication with state or regional task forces or coalitions is reported by 13 (29.5%) respondents, and ten (22.7%) respondents report sharing information on youth gangs with the Drug Enforcement Administration. As a result of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families gang prevention programs, which began in 1989, four local gang units, Baton Rouge (LA), Denver (CO), Fort Worth (TX), and St. Louis (MO), report sharing information with that agency or

its representatives (in one case, specifically Ms. Maria Candamil at ACF is cited, and in another, Professor Scott Decker and Dietrich Smith of the University of Missouri at St. Louis). Of the seven possible kinds of information-sharing links, no departments report more than five, the number reported by seven departments.

Another kind of linkage is that provided by external funding. Of the 53 gang units included in the study, only twelve (22.6%) provide information on external funding support for gang-related programs. This information is displayed in Table 21 below.

**Table 21. Police Departments Reporting External Support for Anti-Gang Programs**

Department	Source or Type of Funding	Amount	Year Received
Anaheim (CA)	Community Development Block Grant	\$204,000	1991
Colorado Springs (CO)	Division of Criminal Justice	\$404,905	1990
	Special Investigative Fund	\$221,846	1990
Dallas (TX)	TX Criminal Justice Division	\$137,000	1989
	Hillcrest Foundation	\$18,000	1991
Fort Worth (TX)	ACF, DHHS	\$300,000	1990
Honolulu (HI)	HI Bureau Justice Administration	\$130,700	1989
Long Beach (CA)	CA Office of Criminal Justice Planning	\$139,054	1991
Oakland (CA)	CA Office of Criminal Justice Planning	\$50,000	1989
Phoenix (AZ)	AZ ATF (GREAT Program)	\$800	1991
Sacramento (CA)	CA Office of Criminal Justice Planning	\$113,470	1986
Stockton (CA)	CA Office of Criminal Justice Planning	\$138,138	1989
Tucson (AZ)	AZ Bureau of Justice Assistance	\$70,000	1991
		\$493,000	annual
Wichita (KS)	KS Bureau of Justice (Office of Drug Abuse)	\$66,558	1991

For the most part, funding support for anti-gang programs is provided by state agencies.

The \$300,000 grant to the Fort Worth (TX) Police Department spread over three years from DHHS is a grant for field-initiated research.

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

## STRATEGY RESPONSES TO GANG PROBLEMS

Using the data gathered in the 1987 National Youth Gang Program survey conducted by the University of Chicago in cooperation with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Spergel and Curry (1990) developed a community-level measure of perceived gang program effectiveness. Classifying strategies into the five categories of suppression, community organization, social intervention, opportunities provision, and organizational change, they found only the prevalence of opportunities provision and community organization as primary strategies to be statistically related to increased perception of community program success. Though suppression was the most commonly reported primary strategy, the researchers found neither suppression, social intervention, nor organizational change as primary strategies to be associated with perceived effectiveness.

The final portion of the 1992 WVU survey was sent to all 72 of the largest U.S. city police departments reporting the presence of gang-related crime problems. Rather than attempting to generate a general effectiveness measure similar to that of Spergel and Curry (1990), this study asked respondents to assess each specific strategy that their unit has pursued. Sixty-five (90.3%) of the 72 departments with reported gang problems completed the strategies questionnaire. The results are shown in Table 22 on the following page.

No single strategy is reported as having been employed by all 65 responding departments. All but one (98.5%) have attempted to deal with their gang crime problem by identifying gang members, a strategy classified under suppression by Spergel and Curry. The next most commonly tried strategies, however, constitute what are identified as community organization

strategies -- cooperating with the media (93.8%), sending speakers to community organizations (90.8%), and contacting community organizations about the problem (89.2%). The two least reported strategies fall under the classification of opportunities provision -- cooperating with school tutoring programs (21.5%) and cooperating with jobs programs (27.7%). In terms of being evaluated as being "very effective," the most commonly attempted strategy of identifying gang members is classified as such by 64.1% of the respondents. It is closely followed in terms of perceived effectiveness by special case management of gang member files (identified as "very effective" by 62.7% of those trying it), increased enforcement against gang members ("very effective" by 59.6%), and increased law enforcement liaison ("very effective" by 54.9%). Hagedorn (1988), Jankowski (1991), and Moore (1992) have all suggested that law enforcement and media share the goal of making gangs appear to be as violent and dangerous as possible. Such common goals may exist, but, for the respondents in this study, the compatibility of the two community institutions, law enforcement and media, in dealing with the gang problem is not reflected by police evaluations of the effectiveness of working with the media.

**Table 22. Strategies of Largest Cities in Dealing with Their Local Gang Problem (n = 65)**

Strategies and Number of Cities Attempting Each	Level of Perceived Effectiveness					
	Strategy	Number Attempted	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	No Effect	Negative Effect
1. Contacting community organizations about problem	58 (89.2%)	24.1%	63.8%	6.9%	1.7%	3.4%
2. Sending speakers to community organizations	59 (90.8%)	35.6%	54.2%	6.8%	1.7%	1.7%
3. Working with community organizations	54 (83.1%)	24.1%	68.5%	1.9%	1.9%	3.7%
4. Organizing community watches	41 (63.1%)	22%	65.9%	9.8%	0%	2.4%
5. Soliciting information from community organizations	48 (73.8%)	22.9%	70.8%	4.2%	0%	2.1%
6. Sharing information with community organizations	54 (83.1%)	22.2%	64.8%	7.4%	1.9%	3.7%
7. Organizing graffiti cleanups	39 (60%)	51.3%	38.5%	5.1%	0%	5.1%
8. Instituting the DARE program	52 (80%)	50%	32.7%	7.7%	0%	9.6%
9. Setting-up or supporting other school programs	47 (72.3%)	46.8%	44.7%	4.3%	0%	4.3%
10. Cooperating with school tutoring programs	14 (21.5%)	28.6%	57.1%	7.1%	0%	7.1%
11. Cooperating with jobs programs	18 (27.7%)	11.1%	72.2%	11.1%	0%	5.6%
12. Cooperating with counseling programs	31 (47.7%)	19.4%	74.2%	3.2%	0%	3.2%
13. Cooperating with religious groups or churches	41 (63.1%)	22%	70.7%	4.9%	0%	2.4%
14. Cooperating with the media	61 (93.8%)	23%	32.8%	23%	18%	3.3%
15. Identification of gang members	64 (98.5%)	64.1%	31.3%	1.6%	0%	3.1%
16. Special case management of gang member files	51 (78.5%)	62.7%	33.3%	2%	0%	2%
17. Special intelligence operations against gangs	52 (80%)	50%	46.2%	0%	0%	3.8%
18. Increased enforcement against gang members	52 (80%)	59.6%	36.5%	0%	0%	3.8%
19. Increased incarceration of gang members	46 (70.8%)	45.7%	47.8%	4.3%	0%	2.2%
20. Increased law enforcement liaison	51 (78.5%)	54.9%	37.3%	0%	0%	7.8%
21. Obtaining additional resources or funding	31 (47.7%)	29%	45.2%	19.4%	0%	6.5%
22. Advocacy for new laws	35 (53.8%)	11.4%	54.3%	20%	2.9%	11.4%



The strategy of cooperating with the media is identified as having a "negative effect" by 18% of those law enforcement agencies attempting it. In terms of perceived negative impact, no other strategy comes close.

## DISCUSSION

This survey of large metropolitan police departments shows that official law enforcement reaction to gang problems is widespread in the largest U.S. cities. In 72 (91.1%) of the 79 police departments in the largest U.S. cities (with final 1990 census populations of 195,000 or more), the most knowledgeable departmental representative as designated by the department's chief administrator reports the officially acknowledged presence of groups identified as "gangs" that engage in criminal activity and involve youth as members within the department's jurisdiction. Three more major cities (3.8%) report other kinds of organized criminal activity involving youths that are officially identified by some label other than "gang." Of those cities reporting gang problems, a majority also report additional problems with groups that they label as posses or crews. Only four large U.S. cities report no groups involved in criminal activity and involving youths that are officially designated as gangs, posses, crews, or drug organizations. These statistics indicate a wide geographically diverse distribution in official reactions to gang problems in the nation's largest cities. Comparisons between these 1992 statistics and those from three previous national-level studies of gang problems reveal statistically significant increases in the distribution of gang problems as perceived by law enforcement agencies.

**\*\* DRAFT - NOT FOR DISSEMINATION \*\***

In the largest U.S. cities, local urban police departments maintain official records on, at least, 3,876 gangs, 202,981 gang members, and 36,265 gang incidents. Our analysis shows, however, that the quality of information available for assessing the scope of gang problems on local levels, much less on a national level, is subject to a number of shortcomings. While records, either manual or computerized, are maintained on by all 72 of the large cities reporting gang problems, there are major differences in the ability of local departments to report key kinds of assessment information, specifically annual tabulations of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents. For example, only 27 large city police departments can report or obtain reports on annual tabulations of gangs, gang members, and gang-related incidents. Only 42 of the 72 large city police departments with reported gang problems are able to report the number of annual gang-related homicides within their jurisdictions.

Another problem in the quality of gang information available for national policy decision-making on dealing with perceived gang problems is the absence of uniform definitions of what constitutes a "gang". In several states, including Florida and Texas, state regulations define gangs, and 25 cities (35.7%) out of the 70 with official gang definitions include all six definitional criteria listed by Needle and Stapleton (1983). Still further distinctions using selected items from the twelve criteria used by Spergel and Curry (1992) leaves us with extremely limited consensus in what constitutes a gang across large city police department jurisdictions. Our findings and our review of the literature leads us to agree with Miller (1980) in his conclusion that at no time in the history of gang research and responses to gang problems has there ever been nor does there now exist agreement about what constitutes a

gang. We further agree with Horowitz (1990) that limiting our study of gangs or responses to them to strictly defined social formations without regard for everyday practice and usage by official agencies and local respondents would constitute a theoretical and practical disservice to all concerned with gang phenomena.

An additional problem with existing law enforcement information systems on gangs emerges in our analysis of both the availability and content of available local data on the scope of the gang problem. There is a tendency by many to think about the gang problem in terms of gangs and gang members rather than in terms of gang-related crimes. This tendency is reflected first, as noted above, in the kinds of information that police departments are most likely to be able to report on an annual basis. Second, this tendency is evident in the great discrepancies between numbers of gang members and numbers of gang-related incidents in official statistics where both kinds of statistics are available. For us, and as we have explicitly defined it in this research, a gang problem is constituted not by young men and women organizing themselves into groups with names and symbols. A gang problem is constituted by crimes against people and property, and more specifically crimes that lower the quality of or destroy the lives of the people who are affected by them. The structure of gang information in large U.S. cities as recorded and described in this study is not in congruity with this concern with criminal activity. The information as it now exists and is reported takes on the character of a vast cataloging of young men and women who are identified as being members of indigenous, to a large extent informal, social organizations, with little focus on the gang-related criminal acts that constitute the justification for the cataloging. In only

three of the 26 large cities that report gang members and gang-related crimes do the crimes outnumber the perpetrators.

In noting the problems in how gang information is maintained and recorded across large cities, we do not in any way intend to diminish the seriousness of concern with gang-related crime. We feel that these findings are indicative of growing public and governmental concern with gang problems nationwide. The 974 reported gang-related homicides from the 42 jurisdictions providing that statistic are indeed evidence that the problem of gang-related violence is one requiring public attention. We do strongly recommend that technical assistance from state and federal agencies reflect: *(1) an awareness of the need of a focus on accurate and routine reporting as well as recording of gang-related information and (2) a greater emphasis on the importance of gang-related incident data.*

Data on the demographic characteristics of gang members is also quite limited. Data on age, gender, race, and ethnicity are provided by only relatively small subsets of the responding police departments. Testing hypotheses about increasing adult involvement in gangs, increasing involvement in gang activity by females, the varying degrees of gang involvement by race and ethnicity, and the participation of new immigrant groups in gangs are all dependent upon the degree to which law enforcement data bases can be transformed into management information systems. The degree to which effective gang prevention and intervention programs depend upon specific kinds of social demographic analysis is evident in the research literature. Decisions about which kinds of information production are to receive support must rest with local and national policy makers. We recommend that *to the extent*

*that agreement on policy goals can be reached, efforts be made to bring technical assistance support into accord with the maintenance and reporting of the kinds of information required at the local level.*

The institutionalization of gang policy responses is increasingly occurring. More than half of the large city gang crime units included in this survey have been created since 1985. The formalization of policy does not necessarily insure the implementation of the most effective policies. Findings on the rapid generation of policies and programs in the last several years and the degree to which policies and strategies spread across inter-agency communication networks underscores the need for thorough and comprehensive evaluation strategies at both the national and local levels. A national gang policy should encompass programs that serve the diverse needs of U.S. citizens living in the geographically disparate contexts of what are generally categorized as "gang" problems. Such a program must be based on systematic evaluation procedures. Evaluation results that are of the greatest utility to public decision-makers will inevitably require uniform and accurate information resources. Despite Miller's (1982) expression of the hope that his 1982 survey results would serve as "base line" data for future surveys, national level surveys of gang information and gang problems have remained relatively sporadic in terms of time sequencing. Perhaps, it's time to follow-up on Miller's recommendation that the gang problem is a social concern that deserves continued systematic assessment.

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# APPENDICES

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# Appendix A.

Copies of Initial Letters of Participation



U.S. Department of Justice

National Institute of Justice

Office of the Director

Washington, D.C. 20531

February 10, 1992

To Whom It May Concern:

In the coming weeks, the National Gang Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources will be contacting you or key members of your staff. This group will be asking you to respond to a survey. I would appreciate it if you and your staff cooperate fully with Dr. David Curry of West Virginia University and his associates in completing this survey.

The time needed to complete the survey is a function of the magnitude of your jurisdiction's organized street crime problem. Under street crime problem, please include all youth gang, street gang, crew, posse, or other organized criminal activity that may or may not be adult-led but involve the participation of youth in the conduct of day-to-day criminal operations. If your jurisdiction has no problem, your participation will be limited to informing the survey representatives of that condition. If you have a chronic or emerging problem, and have developed an organized response to your local problem, I encourage you to share up-to-date information on your successes and/or failures with those of us who are concerned with organizing a productive national-level response to what has become a national-level problem.

If you have any questions regarding this survey or NIJ's research on gangs, please do not hesitate to call Winifred Reed at (202)307-0649.

The National Institute of Justice appreciates your cooperation with the survey staff.

Sincerely,

Craig D. Uchida, Director  
Office of Evaluation



March 3, 1992

name-  
address-

greeting-

The primary goal of the National Gang Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources is to generate an updated national profile of the distribution and changes in the distribution of the gang problem. Your department has been included in the Survey on the basis of one or more of the following criteria: (1) You are an urban jurisdiction with a population of over 200,000. (2) A representative of your jurisdiction participated in the 1987 survey conducted by the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program at the University of Chicago. (3) You have a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services gang prevention project funded within your jurisdiction. Secondary goals of the Survey are (1) an assessment of information resources available to law enforcement in dealing with the gang problem, (2) a study of the social structure of agency interaction in dealing with the gang problem (in particular, the distribution and sharing of information resources), and (3) an evaluation of specific strategies for dealing the gang problem.

In the next few days, your department will receive a call from one of the Survey staff. We will ask you to refer us to the official most knowledgeable with the gang or other organized youth crime problem in your jurisdiction. Depending on your answers to the screening questions about whether your department officially recognizes a gang problem in your jurisdiction or has an organized response to the problem, we may or may not need additional information. We will make every attempt to make our interaction with you and your staff as limited and convenient as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Project Director R.J. Fox or me at (304) 293-3619. I am enclosing a copy of a letter from the National Institute of Justice further clarifying the nature of our study and offering additional information. The results of our study will eventually be distributed by the Department of Justice.

With appreciation,

G. David Curry, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor



# Appendix B.

Examples of Department Correspondence

# City of Cincinnati



Department of Safety  
Division of Police

Lawrence E. Whalen  
Police Chief

April 15, 1992

West Virginia University  
National Assessment Project  
Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
109 White Hall  
Morgantown, West Virginia 36506-9900

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed is the Cincinnati Police Division's response to the University of West Virginia's National Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources. This survey was completed by Police Specialist William Mineer, Youth Gang Coordinator, for the Cincinnati Police division. P.S. Mineer can be contacted at the following mailing address:

P.S. William Mineer  
Cincinnati Police Division  
Intelligence Section  
310 Ezzard Charles Drive  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45214  
(513)352-2552

If we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

*Joseph W. Hall*  
Joseph W. Hall  
Police Lieutenant  
Intelligence Section  
Commander

JWH/MCT/mct

Enclosure

Lexington  
Fayette  
Urban  
County  
Government



04-14-92

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF POLICE

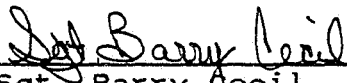
Robert J Fox, Project Director  
West Virginia University  
National Assessment Project  
Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
109 White Hall  
Morgantown WV, 26506-9900

Dear Mr. Fox:

Please find attached a completed survey pertaining to gangs and gang activity within Fayette County. At present we are unable to verify the existence of a posse or crew in Fayette County.

Hopefully this information will prove beneficial to your needs, if you should you need further, please advise.

Cordially,

  
Sgt. Barry Cecil  
Planning and Analysis Commander

ABC/bjo

cc: Sgt. Barry Cecil  
file

# LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



**DARYL F. GATES**  
Chief of Police

**TOM BRADLEY**  
Mayor

P. O. Box 30158  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90030  
Telephone:  
(213) 893-8103  
Ref#: 8.2.2

April 20, 1992

National Assessment Project  
West Virginia University  
Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
109 White Hall  
Morgantown, West Virginia 26506

Dear Mr. Fox:

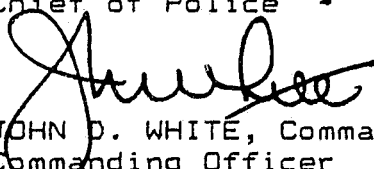
This letter accompanies the Los Angeles Police Department's response to the West Virginia University's National Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources. Enclosed, please find attachments which provide an overview of the specific areas addressed in the survey.

We wish you success in your project and are looking forward to receiving copies of the National Assessment Survey when completed.

If we may be of further assistance, please contact Detective Robert K. Jackson, Acting Officer-in-Charge, Gang Information Section, Detective Support Division at 213 893-8103.

Very truly yours,

DARYL F. GATES  
Chief of Police

  
JOHN D. WHITE, Commander  
Commanding Officer  
Detective Services Group

Attachments



City of Richmond  
Office of the Chief of Police



Room G-35  
501 North 9th Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219  
804 • 780-6700

April 6, 1992

West Virginia University  
National Assessment Project  
Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
109 White Hall  
Morgantown WV 26506-9900

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed you will find a completed survey on, "Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources." I hope this information will be of assistance.

Should your office require further information, please feel free to contact me at (804) 780-6720.

Sincerely,

*Adrienne E. McVey*  
Patrolman Adrienne E. McVey  
Planning & Research Division

/bag

Enclosure

# SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT



Research and Planning

P.O. Box 830388  
San Antonio, Texas 78283-03884  
(512) 299-7615



April 8, 1992

West Virginia University  
National Assessment Project  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
109 White Hall  
Morgantown, WV 26506-9900

Attention of Dr. Curry

Dear Dr Curry:

Our Research and Planning Unit received your " National Gang Assessment Survey" and, on behalf of Chief Gibson, I am pleased to provide the enclosed response.

We certainly hope the information provided will be of assistance to you.

As always, if we can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Willie Smith, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Willie Smith, Jr.  
Planning Officer

Enclosure

# Appendix C.

Complete Listing of Departmental Representatives  
(Sorted by Sample Type, Alphabetically by City)

**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)**

**Akron, OH**

Sergeant Rosalyn Harris  
Services Sub-Division  
Akron Police Dept.  
217 S. High Street  
Akron, OH 44308  
216-375-2470

**Albuquerque, NM**

Sergeant Ralph Kemp  
Gang Unit  
Albuquerque Police Dept.  
5408 2nd Street NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
505-761-8843

**Anaheim, CA**

Sergeant Craig Hunter  
Gang Unit  
Anaheim Police Dept.  
P.O. Box 3369  
Anaheim, CA 92805  
714-254-1411

**Anchorage, AK**

Lieutenant Jerry Weeks  
Metropolitan Drug Enforcement Unit  
Anchorage Police Dept.  
4501 S. Bragaw  
Anchorage, AK 99507  
907-243-2298

**Arlington, TX**

Officer Kevin Lewis  
Arlington Police Dept.  
620 West Division Street  
Arlington, TX 76011  
817-459-5736

**Atlanta, GA**

Lieutenant C.B. Jackson  
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175 Decatur Street SE  
Atlanta, GA 30335  
404-209-5225

**Aurora, CO**

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**Austin, TX**

Sergeant Tony Hipolito  
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715 E. 8th Street  
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512-480-5444

**Baltimore, MD**

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Criminal Intelligence Section  
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**Baton Rouge, LA**

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**Birmingham, AL**

Lieutenant J.B. McIntosh  
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**Boston, MA**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)**

**Buffalo, NY**

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**Charlotte, NC**

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Charlotte, NC 28202  
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**Chicago, IL**

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**Cincinnati, OH**

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**Cleveland, OH**

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**Colorado Springs, CO**

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**Columbus, OH**

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**Corpus Christi, TX**

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Corpus Christi Police Dept.  
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**Dallas, TX**

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**Denver, CO**

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Denver, CO 80205  
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**Detroit, MI**

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Detroit Police Dept.  
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Detroit, MI 48226  
313-596-1800

**El Paso, TX**

Deputy Chief Greg Drollinger  
El Paso Police Dept.  
911 Raynor  
El Paso, TX 79903  
915-564-7309

**Fort Worth, TX**

Lieutenant Craig Slayton  
Fort Worth Police Dept.  
350 West Belknap  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
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**Fresno, CA**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)**

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**Houston, TX**

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Criminal Intelligence  
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Houston, TX 77002  
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**Indianapolis, IN**

Sergeant Ray Walton  
Indianapolis Police Dept.  
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**Jackson, MS**

Sergeant E.W. Williams  
Jackson Police Dept.  
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Jackson, MS 39205  
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**Jacksonville, FL**

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**Jersey City, NJ**

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Jersey City, NJ 07302  
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**Kansas City, MO**

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Kansas City, MO 64106  
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**Las Vegas, NV**

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Las Vegas, NV 89101  
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**Lexington, KY**

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**Long Beach, CA**

Detective Norm Sorenson  
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**Los Angeles, CA**

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CRASH  
Los Angeles Police Dept.  
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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)**

**Mesa, AZ**

Sergeant Dennis Donna  
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130 N. Robson  
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**Miami, FL**

Sergeant Joe Rimondi  
Miami Police Dept.  
400 NW 2nd Street  
Miami, FL 33128  
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**Milwaukee, WI**

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**Minneapolis, MN**

Officer Tim Prill  
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612-673-2121/3568

**Mobile, AL**

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Mobile Police Dept.  
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**Nashville, TN**

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Nashville Police Dept.  
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**New Orleans, LA**

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**New York, NY**

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New York Police Dept.  
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New York, NY 10038  
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**Newark, NJ**

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Newark Police Dept.  
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**Norfolk, VA**

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**Oakland, CA**

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**Oklahoma City, OK**

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**Omaha, NE**

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Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)

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**Phoenix, AZ**

Lieutenant Mike Midkiff  
Classification Dept.  
Phoenix Police Dept.  
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**Pittsburgh, PA**

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**Portland, OR**

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**Raleigh, NC**

Lieutenant Dennis Ford  
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**Richmond, VA**

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**Riverside, CA**

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**Rochester, NY**

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**Sacramento, CA**

Sergeant Ralph Coyle  
Sacramento Police Dept.  
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**San Antonio, TX**

Planning Officer Willie Smith, Jr.  
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**San Diego, CA**

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**San Francisco, CA**

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San Francisco, CA 94103  
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**San Jose, CA**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Over 200,000 (n = 79)**

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**Seattle, WA**

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**Shreveport, LA**

Sergeant Steve Floyd  
Shreveport Police Dept.  
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**St. Louis, MO**

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St. Louis, MO 63103  
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**St. Paul, MN**

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**St. Petersburg, FL**

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Youth Resources Section  
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**Tampa, FL**

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**Toledo, OH**

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Toledo, OH 43624  
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**Tucson, AZ**

Lieutenant Kermit Miller  
Tucson Police Dept.  
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**Tulsa, OK**

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**Virginia Beach, VA**

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Virginia Beach Police Dept.  
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**Washington, DC**

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**Wichita, KS**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Under 200,000 (n = 44)**

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**Benton Harbor, MI**

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Benton Harbor Police Dept.  
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Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
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**Berkeley, CA**

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Berkeley Police Dept.  
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Berkeley, CA 94703  
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**Cambridge, MA**

Sergeant Steve Williams  
Cambridge Police Dept.  
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Cambridge, MA 02139  
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**Charleston, SC**

Lieutenant Jim Doyle  
Charleston Police Dept.  
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Charleston, SC 29403  
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**Chattanooga, TN**

Chief Ralph Cothran  
Chattanooga Police Dept.  
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Chattanooga, TN 37406  
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**Chino, CA**

Detective Miles Puritt  
Chino Police Dept.  
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Chino, CA 91710  
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**Cicero, IL**

Lieutenant Donald Pignato  
Cicero Police Dept.  
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Cicero, IL 60640  
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**Compton, CA**

Commander Hourie Taylor  
Compton Police Dept.  
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Compton, CA 90220  
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**Decatur, GA**

Investigator Chris Hudson  
Decatur Police Dept.  
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Decatur, GA 30030  
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**Des Moines, IA**

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Des Moines Police Dept.  
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Des Moines, IA 50309  
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**El Monte, CA**

Detective Dan Burlingham  
El Monte Police Dept.  
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**Evanston, IL**

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**Flint, MI**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Under 200,000 (n = 44)**

**Fort Lauderdale, FL**

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**Fort Wayne, IN**

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1 Main Street, Room 280  
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**Garden Grove, CA**

Lieutenant Kevin Raney  
Garden Grove Police Dept.  
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Garden Grove, CA 92640  
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**Gary, IN**

Sergeant Warren Writer  
Gary Police Dept.  
1301 Broadway  
Gary, IN 46407  
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**Glendale, CA**

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Glendale, CA 91206  
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**Greenville, MS**

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**Harford, CT**

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**Hialeah, FL**

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**Huntington Beach, CA**

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**Inglewood, CA**

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**Joliet, IL**

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**Kansas City, KS**

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Kansas City Police Dept.  
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**Lincoln, NE**

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**Madison, WI**

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Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Under 200,000 (n = 44)

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**Pasadena, CA**

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Pasadena, CA 91101  
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**Peoria, IL**

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**Pomona, CA**

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**Portsmouth, NH**

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**Racine, WI**

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**Reno, NV**

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**Rockford, IL**

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**Salt Lake City, UT**

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**San Bernardino, CA**

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**Spartansburg, SC**

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**Springfield, MA**

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**Appendix C. National Assessment Survey Respondents: Cities Under 200,000 (n = 44)**

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**Torrance, CA**

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**Wilmington, DE**

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Appendix D.

Copy of Complete Survey Questionnaire

# NATIONAL ASSESSMENT SURVEY

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## The WVU National Assessment Survey of Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Information Resources

*The support for this research is provided through Cooperative Agreement # 91-IJ-CX-K003, National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.*

# RECORDS MAINTENANCE

## Description of Hardware

Hardware	Description (list brand, specifications, and type of network if applicable)

## Description of Software

Software	Description (list brand, specifications, and release versions, e.g. dBase III+)

1. Are the gang records analyzed on a regular basis?  YES  NO

1a. If YES, please describe below:

## Analyses of Records

Details	Descriptions
1b. Who analyzes data?	(name, title)
1c. How are records analyzed?	(computer, by-hand, etc.)
1d. Are reports produced?	(YES or NO)
1e. If YES, are reports published?	(when, where, by whom)
1f. Any other analyzed data?	(describe)

2. Please provide copies of field or variable names for your data sets if possible.

**Table 1. Complete for GANGS**

Check Definitions that Apply	Definitions
	1a. A group.
	1b. A group that has a name.
	1c. A group that has rules.
	1d. A group that has established leaders.
	1e. A group that has some members who do everything together.
	1f. A group from the same part of the city.
	1g. A group that engages in non-criminal activities.
	1h. A group that exists for the sole purpose of performing criminal acts.
	1i. A group that engages in mischief.
	1j. A group that sometimes commits minor property crimes together (vandalism, shop-lifting, trespassing).
	1k. A group that sometimes commits major property crimes together (breaking and entering, burglary).
	1l. A group that sometimes attacks, without weapons, non-members.
	1m. A group that sometimes attacks, with weapons, non-members.
	1n. A group that sometimes attacks, without weapons, members of other groups.
	1o. A group that sometimes attacks, with weapons, members of other groups.
	1p. A group that drinks beer or liquor together.
	1q. A group that sells beer or liquor to other youths.
	1r. A group that smokes marijuana together.
	1s. A group that sells marijuana to other youths.
	1t. A group that uses cocaine or other "hard" drugs together.
	1u. A group that sells cocaine or other "hard" drugs.
	1v. A group that considers some part (turf or territory) of the community to be theirs exclusively.
	1w. A group in which members wear certain colors.
	1x. A group in which members share a common set of signs and symbols to identify the group.
	1y. A group that lets other groups know they're around by writing graffiti.

# STATISTICS

Report the number of the following types of offenses in your jurisdiction attributed to youth gangs in 1991:

**Table 3. Number of Gang Offenses**

Type of Offense	Total Number of Each Offense	Male	Female	Comments or Clarifications
1a. Homicide				
1b. Other Violent				
1c. Property				
1d. Drug Related				
1e. Vice				
1f. Other				
<b>TOTALS:</b>				

What was the total number of gangs in your jurisdiction in 1991? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the total number of gang members in your jurisdiction in 1991? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many of these members were female? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What number (and percentage) of gang-related incidents or cases coming to your department or unit's attention in 1991 involved persons who were:

**Table 5. Gang-Related Incidents**

Involved in Gang-Related Incident	Number	Percent
5a. Juveniles		
5b. Adults		

6. During 1991, how many "drive-bys" involved gang members? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many of these members were female? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Are there female gangs unaffiliated with (independent of) male gangs in your jurisdiction?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, how many female gangs are there? \_\_\_\_\_

# RACE & ETHNICITY OF GANG MEMBERS

1. Does your department maintain records on the ethnicity of gangs?

YES      NO

If YES, complete the table(s) below listing the **number** of group members of each ethnicity for 1990 and 1991.

If NO, give your best percentage estimate for each ethnicity.

*Describe for GANGS*

Ethnicity	Number 1990	Number 1991	Percent Estimate if no official records
White	_____	_____	_____ %
Black	_____	_____	_____ %
African-American	_____	_____	_____ %
Jamaican	_____	_____	_____ %
Other (list) _____	_____	_____	_____ %
Hispanic	_____	_____	_____ %
Mexican-American	_____	_____	_____ %
Puerto-Rican	_____	_____	_____ %
Salvadoran	_____	_____	_____ %
Other (list) _____	_____	_____	_____ %
Asian	_____	_____	_____ %
Vietnamese	_____	_____	_____ %
Chinese	_____	_____	_____ %
Filipino	_____	_____	_____ %
Other (list) _____	_____	_____	_____ %
Other (list) _____	_____	_____	_____ %
_____	_____	_____	_____ %
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>100%</b>

# STRATEGIES

STRATEGIES FOR COMBATTING GANG PROBLEM		If YES, how EFFECTIVE was the strategy?			
Strategy	Attempted?				
Contacting community organizations about problem	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Sending speakers to community organizations	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Working with community organizations	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Organizing community watches	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Soliciting information from community organizations	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Sharing information with community organizations	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Organizing graffiti cleanups	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Instituting the DARE program	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Setting up or supporting other school programs	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Cooperating with school tutoring programs	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Cooperating with jobs programs	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Cooperating with counseling programs	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Cooperating with religious groups/churches	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Cooperating with media	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Identification of gang members	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Special case management of gang member files	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Special intelligence operations against gangs	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Increased enforcement against gang members	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Increased incarceration of gang members	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Increased law enforcement liaison	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Obtaining additional resources & funding	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Advocacy for new laws	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Other (specify)	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT
Other (specify)	YES NO	VERY	SOMEWHAT	NO EFFECT	NEGATIVE EFFECT



# YOUR SPECIAL UNIT

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1. What year was your gang program or gang unit established? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many personnel are assigned to this unit or sub-unit dealing with gangs? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are there special policies and procedures which guide staff in their activities with gangs?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NOT SURE \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are such policies and procedures written?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NOT SURE \_\_\_\_\_

*If YES, please include a copy of these policies and procedures with your completed survey.*

5. Is special training available to personnel for dealing with gangs?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are there any special laws in your jurisdiction to deal with gang incident or cases?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NOT SURE \_\_\_\_\_

If NO, is there any legislation pending?

(Please give name of legislation, House # or Bill # if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Directions**

**Complete the following table, indicating which local agencies your special unit gives or receives information from regarding youth gangs or other similar groups.**

**Local Level Agency Contacts**

Name of Agency	Information	Name of Contact Person
Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations	Receive    Give	
Department of Justice (specify division) _____	Receive    Give	
Department of Health and Human Services (specify division) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	

**Directions**

**Complete the following table, indicating which national agencies your special unit gives or receives information from regarding youth gangs or other similar groups.**

**National Level Agency Contacts**

Name of Agency	Information	Name of Contact Person
Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations	Receive    Give	
Department of Justice (specify division) _____	Receive    Give	
Department of Health and Human Services (specify division) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	
Other (specify) _____	Receive    Give	

# ADVISORY STRUCTURES

Is there a special internal agency advisory structure which advises or guides your unit's operation?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES, describe the advisory structure below:

**Table 1. Internal Advisory Structures**

2a. Who are the members?	
2b. Who is eligible?	
2c. How are the members selected?	

Is there an external agency or community group which advises or influences your unit's operations?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES, describe agency or group in the table below:

**Table 3. External Agency Description**

a. Name of group or agency?	
3b. How many members in the group?	
c. How long has the group existed?	

# DEPARTMENTAL FUNDING

Does your department receive external funding for gang programs?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES, please identify funding source(s) below.

**Table 1. Sources of Funding**

Sources of Funding	Year Acquired	Public or Private?	Amount \$	Percent Total
<b>Department of Justice (specify division)</b> a. _____ b. _____ a. _____	<b>Department of Justice Sources</b>			
<b>Department of Health &amp; Human Services (specify division)</b> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____	<b>Department of Health &amp; Human Services Sources</b>			
<b>Other Sources (specify)</b> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____	<b>Other Sources</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>100%</b>

# Appendix E.

## Examples of Official Gang Definitions

## Appendix E. Examples of Official Gang Definitions

### 1. Albuquerque, NM

Gang "The association of three or more persons on a continuing basis who identify under a common symbol of name and who are involved in illegal activities, to include, but not limited to:"

1. Homicide
2. Assault with Deadly Weapon
3. Aggravated Battery/ Assault
4. Trafficking in Narcotics
5. Burglary/Larceny
6. Intimidations
7. Criminal Damage to Property
8. Vandalism (Graffiti)

### 2. Aurora, CO

Gang "A group of juveniles and/or adults who may reside in a specific geographic area and interact among themselves, usually to the exclusion of other groups. These groups usually refer to themselves by a group name or designation and their activities are generally criminal in nature."

### 3. Austin, TX

Gang "Criminal street gang means three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities."

### 4. Charlotte, NC

Gang

1. An ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal;
2. Which has a common name or common identifying sign or symbol;
3. Whose members, individually or collectively, engage in a pattern of criminal activity, harassment, intimidation or other menacing behavior.

## Appendix E. Examples of Official Gang Definitions

### 5. Dallas, TX

- Gang "A street gang is defined as an on-going organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, which meets both of the following criteria:"
1. Has a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, or colors: **and**
  2. Has members or associates who, individually or collectively, engage in or have engaged in the following patterns of criminal activity by the commission/solicitation of two or more of the offenses below (*list of offenses not shown*).

### 6. Indianapolis, IN

- Gang "Any identifiable group of people usually teens who perceive themselves as a gang and who others perceive as a gang and who are involved in criminal activities there by eliciting a negative response from the community."

### 7. Kansas City, MO

- Gang "Group of individuals whose sole purpose is to commit a criminal offense or act of intimidation and this group continues to associate beyond the criminal activity or intimidation."

### 8. Los Angeles, CA

- Gang "A group of three or more persons who have a common identifying sign or symbol and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal activity, creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within the community."

### 9. New York, NY

- Gang "A group of juveniles and adults, allegiance of some duration, sometimes turf, symbols, special dress or color, special interest in violence for respect, recognition as gang by itself and other."



## Appendix E. Examples of Official Gang Definitions

### 10. Omaha, NE

Gang :

1. Organized group with leader.
2. Unified group remains together in good and bad economic times.
3. Wear colors and signs and communicate their presence in verbal and non verbal ways.
4. Their activities are threatening to the community.

### 11. Phoenix, AZ

Gang "Means any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of it's primary activities the commission of any criminal act, which has a common name or common identifying sign or symbol, whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in criminal gang activity and/or whose members are bonded by race, ethnic background, or geographical area."

### 12. Riverside, CA

Criminal Street Gang:

1. Any ongoing organization, association, or group
2. of three or more persons
3. whether formal or informal
4. having as one of its primary activities
5. the commission of one or more of the criminal acts listed under the section "Pattern of Criminal Gang Activity"
6. which has a common name or common identifying symbol
7. whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity.

### 13. Sacramento, CA

Gang:

1. three or more people.
2. recognized by others as a gang
3. claim some turf or territory
4. involves collective or individuals in a pattern of criminal activity or have been in past in a pattern of criminal activity.

## Appendix E. Examples of Official Gang Definitions

### 14. St. Louis, MO

Gang (FBI definition):

A criminal gang may exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Conspires to commit, or commits, crimes against individuals or groups based on race, color, religion, sexual preference, national origin, or rival gang association;
2. Uses a gang name, common identifying sign or symbol, or has an identifiable leadership;
3. Has a high rate of interaction among members to the exclusion of other groups;
4. Claims a neighborhood and/or other geographical territory; or
5. Members wear distinctive types of clothing, exhibit distinctive appearance, or communicate in a distinct or unique style.

### 15. Toledo, OH

Gang "A group of three or more persons, somewhat organized for some duration, engaging in criminal activity, and creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within the community. Gangs are sometimes characterized by turf concerns, symbols, special dress, and colors."