

Maile Siemon

Folklore in the Media

Dr. Collins

November 19, 1997

The essence of folklore and folk belief is a commonly shared, culturally defined sense of reality. Interpretations of fact are simply a set of rules, passed on over centuries, which allow us to perceive an understanding of the world we live in. In reference to this project, a gang is a group of individuals who share similar customs and ritualistic behaviors. These similarities are what allow society to define a gang as a sub-culture, clearly separated from mainstream culture. Due to the apparent nature of gangs, it is necessary to separate "them" from "us" in order to maintain a sense of well being about human nature. For most of the world, the only understanding we have about gangs are denoted from interpretations of fact presented by the media.

Gang symbols define the existence of a gang, according to journalists. Clothing, or dress, was an important gang motif presented in the articles. In fact, three fourths of all the articles referred to some type of gang clothing reference. From this definition, a gang member could be identified by displaying something as simple as a specific color.

Names are also an important aspect of the definition of a gang. They infer a sense of belonging to a particular group and through definition, set that group apart from the rest. One interesting fact is that, within the articles, there were twenty eight references to two gangs called the "Bloods" and the "Crips." This is relevant because these gangs, along with many of the others I assume, have no legitimate ties to Kentucky.

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However, because they are the most widely known, they were included in reference contributing to the folklore that gangs are close to home.

There were thirty-three drug references found in the articles. The prevalence of the existence of drugs in gang literature would make the assumption that drugs are an integral part of the lives of all gang members. Money is another symbol that plays a role in gang activity. Also, according to the media, gangs participate in a great deal of violent behavior, which is noted in these articles through the reference to guns and drive-by shootings.

There are many forms of folk art associated with gangs. Gangs leave their "mark" on their "turf" in the form of artistically created symbols, or graffiti, which recognizes what specific gang rules over which specific territory. Graffiti is, by far, the most recognized symbol associated with gangs and is mentioned on sixty-one occasions throughout the articles. Another display of folk art are hand signals, or "signs," which display to other members and rival gangs which group they belong to.

Another symbol associated with gangs are tattoos. Commonly, these tattoos display the same insignia as the graffiti, the gang's symbol. One other interesting folkway gangs participate in is the ritual initiation. This is the demand for a prospective gang member to prove him/herself to the group by exhibiting loyalty and respect to its leaders. This ritual, which differs from group to group, is just part of the process

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of becoming a gang member and is seen as a "right of passage."

The most interesting folklore content in the articles was the reference to information sources. The articles demonstrate that the most knowledgeable people, when it came to information about gangs, were police officials. This is a very important point because it illustrates that a huge majority, if not all of the information that we, the public, receive about gangs is from the direct quotes and references to the police. In all, there were one hundred and twenty-seven references to the police in the articles that were examined. This number, when compared to the six total sources of information received from gang members themselves, displays the fact that we don't bother gathering accurate information from the actual source. For some reason, we would rather believe in the information of highly respected officials such as police officers.

When synthesized, the material in this project is also a form of folklore. By drafting accounts of occurrences of folklore in these articles, I have realized that there is a definite pattern to the information we receive as recipients of the media. This pattern is the essence of folklore; nothing ever changes. The information that was apparent in 1997 was the same information offered in 1993, and for that matter, probably the same information that has existed about gangs since the first occurrence of them. At some time, these labels associated with gangs were labeled and stereotyped to fit a certain explanation of reality. In order to separate "us" from "them," there must be a clearly defined character of gangs that

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sets them and their apparently inhumane nature apart from the rest of society. Therefore, this information must exist in order to allow us to continue in our pre-existing beliefs about human nature.

Although the media may perpetuate the existence of folklore associated with gangs, they really have no choice in the matter. The media shares in the cultural interpretation of existing reality and cannot be set apart from it. However, I am under the assumption that we as a society can, in fact, reconstruct our own sense of reality. Sometimes, I feel that humans are so comfortable in the existing order that they will do anything to maintain it, including tolerating injustices. There is a great deal of fear and insecurity in change. However, social fact and social change construct a circular relationship; both are inevitable. I believe that much of our society's reality is based upon the acceptance of tradition, or folklore. To me, acceptance of fact for the purpose of avoiding fear and insecurity is a bizarre and meaningless concept based upon the hedonistic principal of humanity. We have spent the majority of this century concerning ourselves with things like technology that have brought us so far from our intended human potential. The only answer to all this chaos lies in the possibility of a social revolution, which I believe has already begun.

Gang Symbols

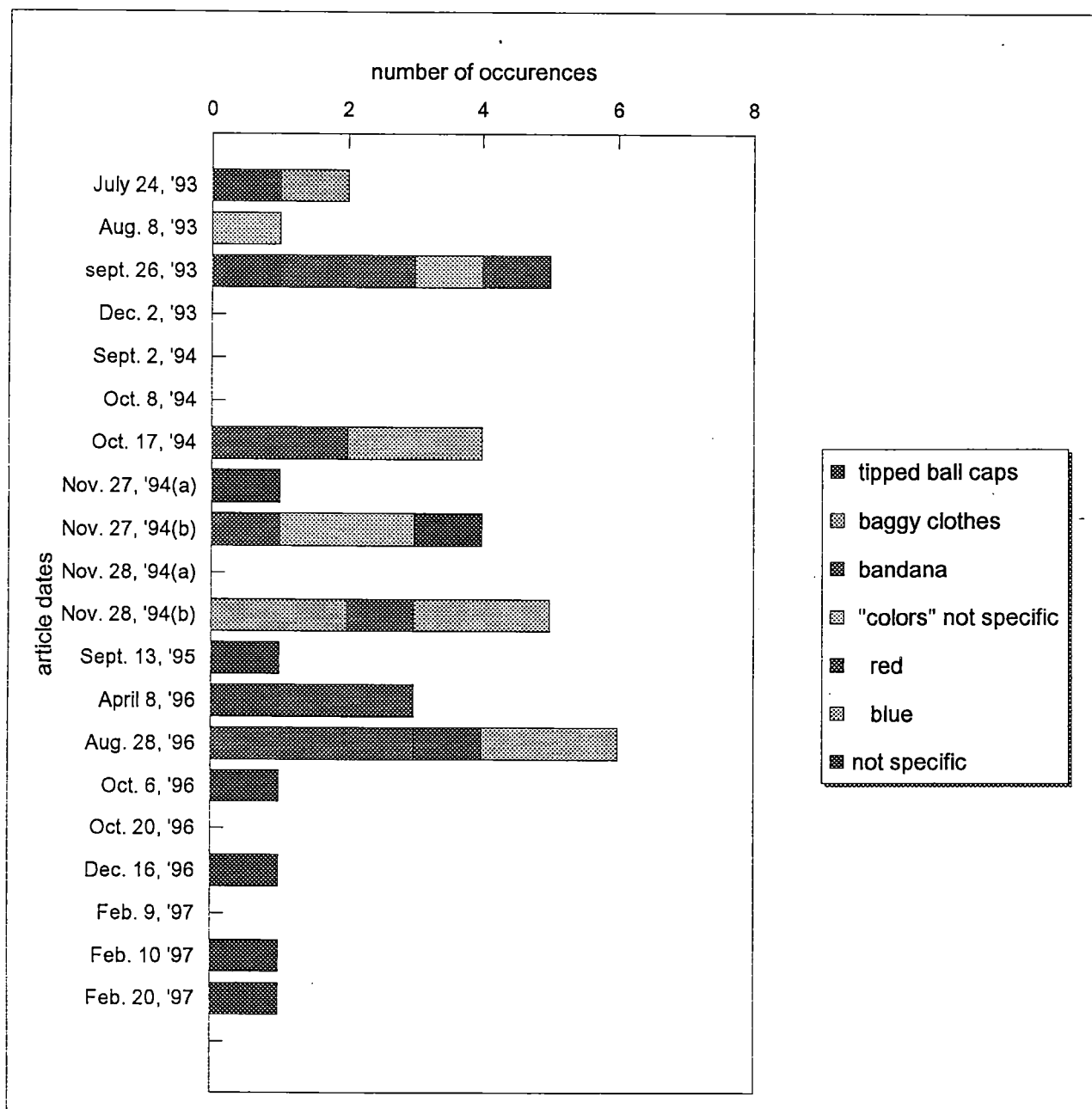
Clothing (dress)

not specific
tipped ball caps
baggy clothes
bandana
"colors" not specific
red
blue

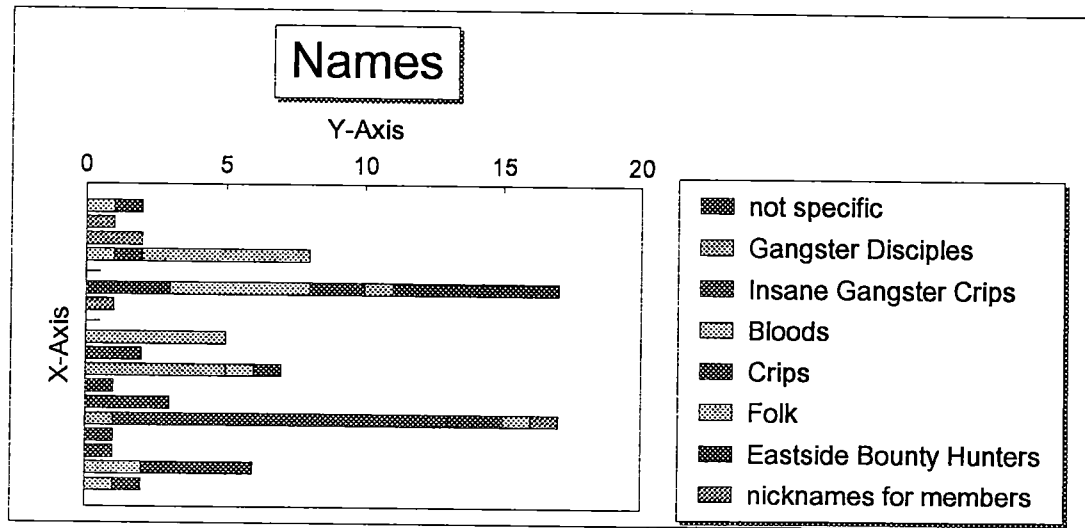
July 24, '93	Aug. 8, '93	sept. 26, '93	Dec. 2, '93	Sept. 2, '94	Oct. 8, '94	Oct. 17, '94	Nov. 27, '94(a)	Nov. 27, '94(b)	Nov. 28, '94(a)	Nov. 28, '94(b)	Sept. 13, '95	April 8, '96	Aug. 28, '96	Oct. 6, '96	Oct. 20, '96	Dec. 16, '96	Feb. 9, '97	Feb. 10, '97	Feb. 20, '97	Totals
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				1		1											1			3
				1											2					3
						2			2		1		1		1	2	3			11
					1	1					2									4
						1											1			2
									2						2		2			6

Category Total

36



Names

[illegible]

Gang Symbols

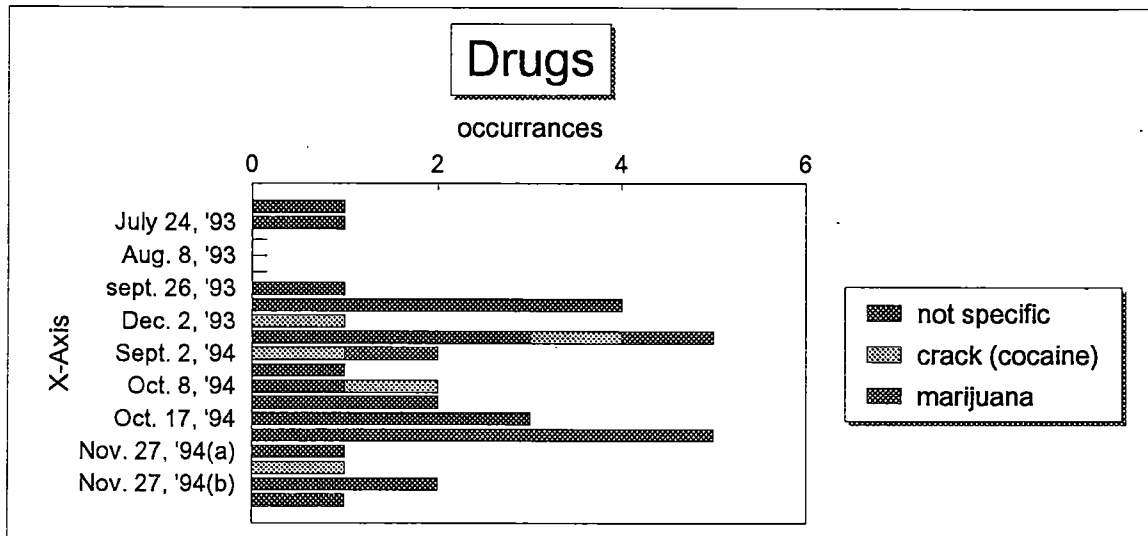
Drugs

not specific
crack (cocaine)
marijuana

	July 24, '93	Aug. 8, '93	sept. 26, '93	Dec. 2, '93	Sept. 2, '94	Oct. 8, '94	Oct. 17, '94	Nov. 27, '94(a)	Nov. 27, '94(b)	Nov. 28, '94(a)	Nov. 28, '94(b)	Sept. 13, '95	April 8, '96	Aug. 28, '96	Oct. 6, '96	Oct. 20, '96	Dec. 16, '96	Feb. 9, '97	Feb. 10 '97	Feb. 20, '97	Total
	1	1				1	4		1	3	1	1	2	3	1	1		2	1	22	
									1	1	1		1			4		1		5	
										1	1									6	

Category Total

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Gang Symbols

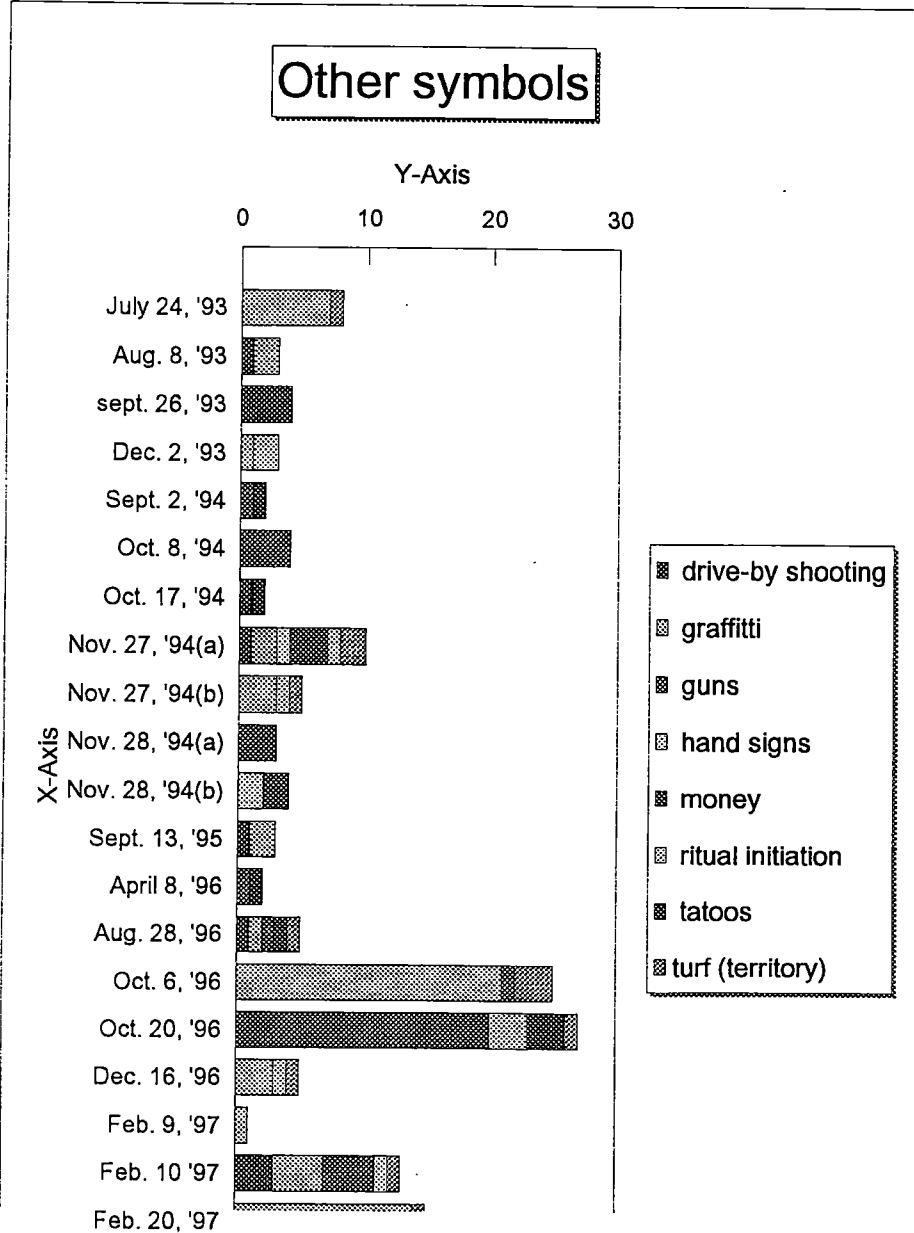
Other symbols

drive-by shooting
graffitti
guns
hand signs
money
ritual initiation
tatoos
turf (territory)

	July 24, '93	Aug. 8, '93	sept. 26, '93	Dec. 2, '93	Sept. 2, '94	Oct. 8, '94	Oct. 17, '94	Nov. 27, '94(a)	Nov. 27, '94(b)	Nov. 28, '94(a)	Nov. 28, '94(b)	Sept. 13, '95	April 8, '96	Aug. 28, '96	Oct. 6, '96	Oct. 20, '96	Dec. 16, '96	Feb. 9, '97	Feb. 10 '97	Feb. 20, '97	Total
drive-by shooting		1	4				1	1				1		1					3		12
graffitti	7	2		1				2	3			2		1	21		3	1	4	***	61
guns					1	4		5		3			1		1	17			4		31
hand signs								1			2								1		4
money								3			2			1		3					9
ritual initiation				2				1	1							3	1				8
tatoos					1		1						1	1		3					7
turf (territory)	1							2	1					1	3	1	1		1	1	12

Category Total

144



Gang Symbols

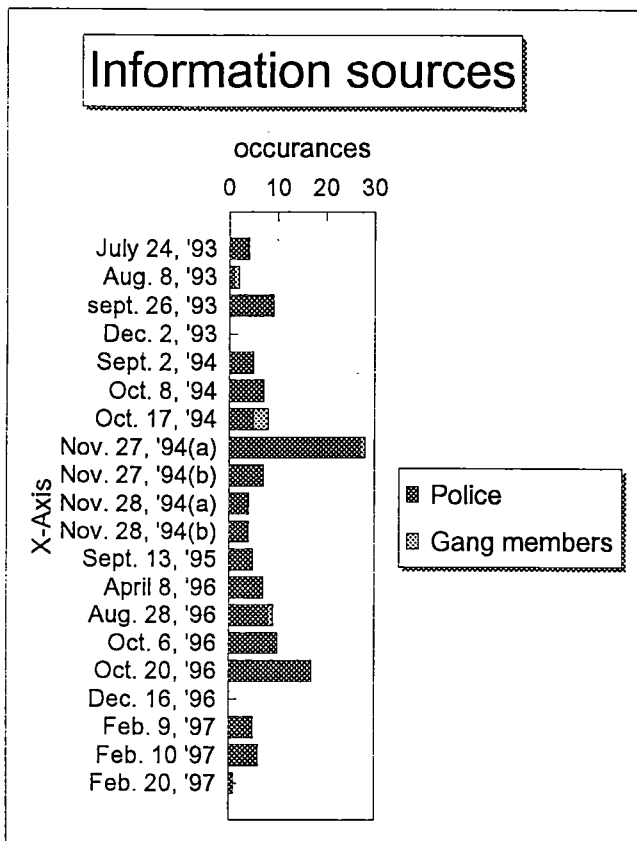
Information sources

Police

Gang members

	July 24, '93	Aug. 8, '93	sept. 26, '93	Dec. 2, '93	Sept. 2, '94	Oct. 8, '94	Oct. 17, '94	Nov. 27, '94(a)	Nov. 27, '94(b)	Nov. 28, '94(a)	Nov. 28, '94(b)	Sept. 13, '95	April 8, '96	Aug. 28, '96	Oct. 6, '96	Oct. 20, '96	Dec. 16, '96	Feb. 9, '97	Feb. 10 '97	Feb. 20, '97	Total
Police	4	1	9		5	7	5	27	7	4	4	5	7	8	10	17		5	6	1	132
Gang members		1					3	1						1							6

Category Total



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CHICAGO JOURNAL
November 17, 1997

SIGNS OF GANGS

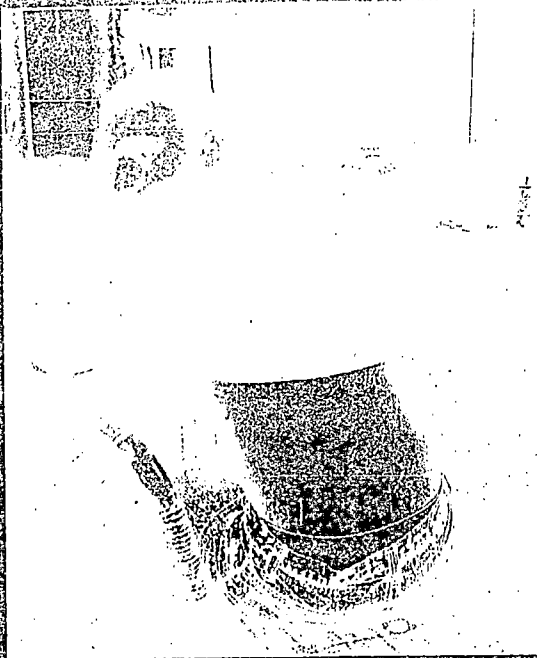
What to look for if you suspect a gang in your neighborhood

- Graffiti that includes gang names or monies
- Groups who use hand signals to communicate to identify each other
- T-shirt bearing the logo and name of a group considered to be a gang
- Hairstyles that include the gang's name or symbol
- A sudden emergence of new friends, all wearing the same colors
- Carrying or wearing a bandanna-like scarf in a pocket, around the ankles or the head
- Graffiti or gang logos drawn inside baseball caps

GETTING HELP

Where to call if you suspect gang activity

- Jefferson County Police - A District - Officer Ed Hatcher - 248-1199
- B District - Officer Glen Minor - 239-9710
- C District - Officer Cheri Smith - 367-0848
- D District - 888-2131
- Louisville Police - Lt. Dano Aschraf - 574-7676



Richard Hardin, 27, who lives in the Portland neighborhood, uncovered the bandage over a bullet wound he suffered when he was shot as he left a store near his home on Nov. 9.

Gangs mimic big-city groups

Continued from Page One

— but won't release the information they've gathered, saying public confirmation would give the groups credibility.

Crime committed by young people is on the rise, but police say they can compile accurate statistics on how that might be related to gangs. When arrested, suspects don't always admit to being a gang member or joining one, a police official said.

Jefferson County, which has teamed in the past year with at least 30 groups in Jefferson County that call themselves gangs. Members range across racial and economic backgrounds.

In the Portland neighborhood, Southwick to St. Matthews down to Louisville to Jefferson and Shively to Hurstbourne, experts say a new gang culture is developing. A national gang is rumored to be in music and movies. They say that has inspired some gangs to cool in the eyes of many young people. And for many gangs are suburban families said, giving special professor at the School of Social Services Administration at the University of California.

If no attention is being paid to them, they form their own groups. Special said a young person who is susceptible to date a

fractious of gang life. The U.S. Department of Justice defines a criminal gang as a group of people organized for the purpose of committing criminal acts to benefit the group. Police say they won't pool the local wannabes, because they could develop into hard-core groups if ignored.

All it takes is one charismatic leader to come in and organize the wannabes and we could have a real problem, warned Maj. Stan Mulvaney, chief of the Louisville Police Department's criminal investigation unit.

Police say the local groups aren't organized — or as ruthless — as hard-core gangs. The Bloods and the Crips are the only gangs that terrorize communities with drive-by shootings and operate elaborate criminal enterprises, chiefly based on drug trafficking.

But Richard Hardin says he is the proof that Louisville-area gangs are dangerous despite the pretend label police put on them.

Richard, a 27-year-old Portland resident, said he was involved in a fight with two boys at school. One was a member of a gang he called the Real Original Gangsters. Richard said he won the fight, but the gang member vowed revenge.

For two days, Richard said, members of the gang came to his house and passed him pointed guns at him. He told them they would "get him." He was shot in the back on Nov. 9 as he left a store near his home, and he thinks the shooting was the gang's

making good on its threat.

Local police would call the Gangsters wannabes. "People can't afford to ignore the wannabes, because they are trying to prove themselves, and those numbers are so much greater than hard-core gang members," said Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indianapolis Police Department's anti-gang unit.

Detective Charles Zeplin of the Los Angeles Police Department's gang information section said a Louisville group like the Bonny Hunters may not be as hard-core as gang, but on learning how members describe themselves, he said he'd treat them more seriously than as wannabes.

The mere fact that a group of kids are identifying themselves with a nationwide group of known murderers and thugs would cause him to pay more attention, he said.

Officer Harold Richman of the Detroit Police Department's anti-gang squad said police must treat all the groups like real gangs. He said a Detroit gang, the Latin Cowboys, began with two members five years ago. Less than a year later, police were prosecuting about 10 members of the group on various state and federal charges.

At least wannabes, as gang members, he said. If you want to be a gang, you are a gang.

About seven years ago the Louisville and Jefferson County police departments assigned an officer to each police district to monitor gang activity in response to a request by

Towns can share cities' problems

By Cynthia Wilcox
Star-News

Detective John Borges first spotted the drawing in a plain paper glass and pop tabs served in a high school's cafeteria. It was a small, hand-drawn picture of a man in a suit and tie, with the words "INDIANA" and "INDIANAPOLIS" written above it.

Some people might have thought it was a simple vandalism. But the accompanying detailed drawings of such symbols as five-pointed stars, pitchforks, pyramids, with eyes and nicknames made Borges suspicious.

This wasn't Johnny, loves Mary, Borges said. Someone took the time to write this stuff out. When you looked at it, you knew it had some meaning.

Borges investigates gang activity for the city of 14,000 in Johnson County, about 20 minutes south of Indianapolis. And after talking to Indianapolis police, he learned that the graffiti did have meaning. "Factions of the Vice Lords," a Chicago-based street gang, trafficking in crack cocaine, had come to the middle class town of Franklin.

Franklin police know the town. Before he saw the graffiti,



just big cities that have to worry about gangs. Police say graffiti is usually the first sign a gang is present in a community.

They are marking their territory, their existence, said Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indianapolis Police anti-gang unit. All you come along and paint over that, and a couple of days later it's there again. That's important. It shows you have a group that wants people to know they are around.

Before he saw the graffiti,

Borges said he didn't think some of the crimes were connected to gang initiations. And one of those assaults was a school shooting that went into the hospital, he said.

Indianapolis police say they have confirmed the existence of about 30 gangs and 1,500 gang members in their city since 1989. Borges said the migration south to Franklin was inevitable.

Borges said that in addition to applying state laws that strike at gangs, Franklin passed an ordinance that prohibits loitering during certain hours on some streets. He said it was designed to deter gang from cruising and congregating in certain areas.

Borges said Franklin is also sending police officers to schools to inform teachers and students about gangs.

the blood, and Crips to establish satellite groups in the area. Cole Billy Oates of the county police said certain officers have been trained to recognize the gang culture and they follow up leads.

Some members of the Bonny Hunters interviewed recently at a recreation center said the lifestyle is what attracts them. You get money and don't worry about no one trying to do anything to you, said a 19-year-old member. The main thing is everyone gives you respect.

The Bonny Hunters said they formed satellite groups in some towns and police are trying to keep the gang life. The relative claimed to be a Blood and showed them how to recruit members and make money on the street to spend their money with the Bloods. Bonny Hunters wear the group's colors, red and carry red bandannas.

Experts say that joining a gang is a sign of weakness in many ways. The problem solver for many young people is the University of Louisville who specializes in drug, justice, and social pressure.

Other towns to find the same work and others because the vice is accepted as the norm in some neighborhoods, he said.

Poster said a new trend is emerging. Members who typically would give up gang life when they become adults now stay in longer for economic reasons, because they think they won't find decent jobs.

Most gangs are smaller but with a national network to do with gangs and can be just as violent. Gangs can be just as violent as any other group, said a police officer. There are some gangs only boys and girls also associate with predominantly male gangs.

Members who typically would give up gang life when they become adults now stay in longer for economic reasons, because they think they won't find decent jobs.

Although the popularity of the gangs made up of young black males, the police officer said, some gangs are all black, some are all white, and some, such as the Bonny Hunters, are mixed.

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Police stress that most young people are not involved in gangs and that the police are trying to keep the gang life. The relative claimed to be a Blood and showed them how to recruit members and make money on the street to spend their money with the Bloods. Bonny Hunters wear the group's colors, red and carry red bandannas.

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Jefferson County police Detective David Benton said that even if a location for drug dropouts and gang drive to gangs from Chicago, Baltimore, Tennessee, Cincinnati and St. Louis.

Ronnie Bass, 30, was a member of a Louisville gang called the Brick City Smurfs as a youth. He said he thinks today's local gangs are more dangerous than the gangs of one day, whose goal was to prove a point and keep members from the streets.

It's possible for the past 10 years, many kids have been coming from the streets. Most of the weapons there was no initiation of any kind.

Bass said he thinks it will continue to motivate a group. Today, a gang has five days. With the rules, it's a lot more difficult.

Officer Linda Whits, 30, said she and her colleagues are trying to keep the gang life. The relative claimed to be a Blood and showed them how to recruit members and make money on the street to spend their money with the Bloods. Bonny Hunters wear the group's colors, red and carry red bandannas.

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1999

Headline: SERIES
STREET GANGS
IS THE WRITING ON THE WALL
TOWNS CAN SHARE CITIES' PROBLEMS

Date: November 27, 1994
Page: 11A

Section: NEWS
Edition: METRO
Length: 475

Author: CYNTHIA WILSON

Index Terms: INDIANA
SERIES
STATISTICS
CRIME
CHILDREN
SOCIAL CONDITIONS
LAW ENFORCEMENT

Gang-11/27/94

Text:

Detective John Borges first spotted the drawings of champagne glasses and top hats scrawled in bright colors across the back wall of a mall in Franklin, Ind., in August 1991.

Some people might have dismissed the drawings as simple vandalism. But the accompanying detailed paintings of such symbols as five-pointed stars, pitchforks, pyramids with eyes and nicknames made Borges suspicious.

"This wasn't 'Johnny loves Mary,' " Borges said. "Someone took the time to write this stuff out. When you looked at it, you knew it had some meaning." Borges investigates gang activity for the city of 14,000 in Johnson County, about 20 minutes south of Indianapolis. And after talking to Indianapolis police, he learned that the graffiti did have meaning. Factions of the Vice Lords -- a Chicago-based street gang trafficking in crack cocaine -- had come to the middle-class town of Franklin.

Franklin police know it's not just big cities that have to worry about gangs. Police say graffiti are usually the first sign a gang is present in a community.

"They are marking their territory, their existence," said Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indianapolis police anti-gang unit. "If you come along and paint over that and a couple of days later it's there again, that's important. It shows you have a group that wants people to know they are around."

Before he saw the graffiti, Borges said, young people in Franklin had been talking about the emergence of gangs. But very few residents or city officials wanted to believe it, he said.

Soon they couldn't ignore the rash of burglaries and auto thefts. He said some juveniles were intimidating others and committing serious assaults. Borges said he thinks some of the crimes were committed as part of gang initiations. And some of those assaults were so serious "we had kids going into the hospital," he said.

Indianapolis police said they have confirmed the existence of about 80 gangs and 1,500 gang members in their city since 1989. Borges said the migration south to Franklin was inevitable.

Borges said that in addition to applying state laws that strike at

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gangs, Franklin passed an ordinance that prohibits loitering during certain hours on some streets. He said it was designed to deter gangs from cruising and congregating in certain areas.

Borges said Franklin is also sending police officers into schools to educate teachers and students about gangs.

Memo:

SEE LIBRARY MICROFILM FOR MAP

Graphic:

STREET MAP BY WES KENDALL THAT SHOWS THE LOCATION OF FRANKLIN, INDIANA

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[illegible]

runner Jefferson County. Folks members of the committee said that they did what they were told. (He had told them to beat the rap.) (Crim) up, they probably would have been arrested.

plan, claimed the gangster, was to have sex with two of the gang mem-

CONTRADICTORY

...that these groups didn't have the right to full-fledged criminal organizations.

and such laws as those dealing with
 eliminate syndicates, conspiracy
 d complexity are adequate to deal
 the gang-related crimes. And in
 we have requiring juveniles (and
 mer to be tried as adults if they use

—the Wolfpack — said he believed the law wasn't tough enough. "Six months is said as criminals syndrome," he said. "It's a 10-to-20-year sentence. However, let's say people convicted of this crime have

Kamenists who recently went into private practice, advocated laws requiring more (all time for those con-

to the family. The first is the fact that the family is the basic unit of society. The second is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the economy. The third is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the culture. The fourth is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the polity. The fifth is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the church. The sixth is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the state. The seventh is the fact that the family is the basic unit of the world.

University of Illinois at Chicago. "I think I thought there was a lot of prayer to be had," she said. "I prayed to be brave, to be sane. I don't think I realized or wanted to do any more than that."

Joe Foster, private secretary to the administrator of the University

With parents because of class and race shows youths choose their friends.

It's Jefferson's boys' mothers who think some of those circumstances played a role in her son's decision to join the Folk.

every alone

...children into our society
...ing society? How do
...to realize education is

The city's police chief said that seizures of cocaine in the city's south and west neighborhoods have risen sharply in the last year, and that a larger percentage of the seizures are juveniles. Police said juveniles are being charged with drug trafficking three times as often as adults.

Young Center, Planning Statistics Center, and the Urban Institute. We need to be more conscious that they need to be involved in the planning process. We need to have a more urgent call for more punishment of people who are doing things that would be endangering people. I would like to have a more vigorous role in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

standing that some of us with them," she said. "We have to get community leaders involved. And we have got to give them (people) guidance and opportunities." We had to pull them apart (from gangs) in a way that left them

to what they want in life.

BY: CATHY WATSON

Small World

How much help they are getting from state laws in their effort to deal with gang growth is a matter of debate.

winning-related crimes. And a new law requiring juveniles 14 and older to be tried as adults if they use a gun to commit a felony will help address violent game problems, they said.

But Keith Kinnison, 45, owner of the

tion conviction carries a 1- to 20-year sentence. However, he said, people convicted of that crime have only 20 percent of the same rights. He said the penalties are "unconscionable" for juveniles. This is among the wrongs, he

"The question is whether we assimilate Chinese and not the other way around. You get them the only way you can: you achieve it."
Judge Kevin Delaney

“The question is, How do you assimilate children into our society and not the drug society,” he said. “How do you get them to realize education is the only way they are going to achieve, prosper and

in Indiana, where gangs are a major problem in some areas. State and local officials have passed a variety of legislation. One law describes how a gang activity is illegal, said Richard Benton, of the Indiana state police, police gang squad. In all,

could not overreact and pass laws that don't address underlying factors such as the availability of guns and drugs.

**we only way we are going to
achieve prosperity
Judge Keith Delaney**

There has also been a huge increase in aggravated assaults by juveniles—93 this year compared with 70 in 1989, said Don Steltz, director of the Jefferson County Youth Center. Rising statistics intensify the question whether

The community has to take a leadership role in getting people out of the streets, says a 38-year-old man. "I don't know what's going on with

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1-16

juveniles don't consider the consequences of their crimes beforehand.

In Indiana, where gangs are a major problem in some areas, state and local officials have passed a variety of legislation. One law describes what gang activity is illegal, said Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indianapolis police gang squad. In addition, juveniles can be prosecuted as adults for using a handgun in a crime and juveniles 16 or older convicted of a gang-related crime can be tried as adults.

Kentucky state Sen. Gerald Neal, D-Louisville, said communities should not overreact and pass laws that don't address underlying factors such as the availability of guns and drugs.

The city-county Metro Narcotics Unit said that seizures of cocaine and marijuana have risen sharply and that a larger percentage of the drugs has been taken from juveniles. Police said juveniles are being charged with drug trafficking three times as often now as they were five years ago.

There has also been a huge increase in aggravated assaults by juveniles - 937 last year, compared with 370 in 1989, said Don Steitz, director of the Jefferson County Youth Center. Rising statistics merit concern, but they need not necessarily call for more punishment of youth, said Irving Spergel, a professor in the School of Social Services Administration at the University of Chicago.

Spergel, who is studying gangs across the nation, said that police and court awareness are needed, but that the community also has a role in deterring gang growth.

"The community has to get close to the young people again and understand what's going on with them," he said. "We have to get community leaders involved. And we have got to give them (youth people) guidance and opportunities. . . . We've got to pull them apart (from gangs) in a way to help them do what they want in a positive way."

Caption: "The question is, How do you assimilate children into our society and not the drug society? How do you get them to realize education is the only way they are going to achieve prosperity?" Judge Kevin Delahanty

Graphic:

PHOTO

FILE LOCATION DELAHANTY, KEVIN

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Accession Number: LVL532144

Nov 28, 1994

Street gangs:

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

Even modest suburbs
are not immune

Police prosecutors
here say street gangs are
not just a city problem

Gangs in Louisville and
Washington

Suburban teen-ager fooled his parents

By CYNTHIA WILSON
Staff Writer

He was loath, confused about his
self, worried about his family's future.
So when an acquaintance from
Seattle would always have money,
friends and backups, he ever got in
trouble, he decided in the fall of
1993 that a street gang called the
sok would be his family.

Within a week of joining, the
teen-ager, who lived within his family
in a stylish home in Jefferson town,
had learned all he needed to know
to help the gang thrive. He knew
the hand signals to communicate
with other members. He was on the
way to earning \$450 a week by sell-
ing crack and marijuana. And he
had decided he would fight anyone
at the gang leaders' commands.

"I thought it was the best thing
that ever happened to me," he said
in a recent interview. "I was the cra-
ziest person that ever walked the
face of the earth. Nobody could
touch me."

The newspaper doesn't identify
juvenile offenders. And the boy and
his parents said they feared for his
safety if his name were revealed.

His mother said she still has diffi-
culty believing her son was in a
gang. She said she thought that
when their family moved away from
Louisville, they had escaped such
influences.

But no community is immune,
said Irving Spergel, a professor in
the School of Social Service Ad-
ministration at the University of
Chicago. Spergel, who is studying
gangs nationally, said that even rural
communities are being infiltrated
by gangs.

Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indi-
anapolis police gang squad said it's
important suburbs be vigilant. He
said gangs typically migrate to
smaller communities whose resi-

See SUBURBAN

Page 5 (col.) this section

Headline: SERIES
STREET GANGS: IS THE WRITING ON THE WALL?
SUBURBAN TEEN-AGER FOOLED HIS PARENTS

Date: November 28, 1994
Page: 01A

Section: NEWS
Edition: METRO
Length: 1008

Author: CYNTHIA WILSON

Index Terms: LOUISVILLE
KENTUCKY
JEFFERSON COUNTY
TEENAGER
TEEN
SERIES
QUOTES
CHILDREN
CRIME
FAMILY
SOCIAL CONDITIONS
DRUGS

Text:

He was 16 and confused about his self-worth and his family's love.

So when an acquaintance promised he would always have money, friends and backup if he ever got in trouble, he decided in the fall of 1993 that a street gang called the Folk would be his family.

Within a week of joining, the teen-ager, who lived with his family in a stylish home in Jeffersontown, had learned all he needed to know to help the gang thrive. He knew the hand signals to communicate with other members. He was on his way to earning \$450 a week by selling crack and marijuana. And he had decided he would fight anyone at the gang leaders' command.

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Sgt. Richard Benton of the Indianapolis police gang squad said it's vital that suburbs be vigilant. He said gangs typically migrate to smaller communities, whose residents become vulnerable because the communities lack the resources to fight gangs.

Jeffersontown police had reports about the Folk long before two members allegedly raped an 18-year-old woman in February. Before that, police had investigated the members and concluded that the teen-agers were harmless -- a "loose association of young men," Detective David Burks said.

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The turning point for the group came when Darian L. Blair, a 20-year-old who reportedly had been a member of a gang in Alabama, moved to the area and allegedly became the leader of the Folk in Jeffersontown.

Blair had so much control over other Jeffersontown Folk members, Burks said, that "they did what they were told. If he had told them to beat (the rape victim) up, they probably would have."

Blair is in the Jefferson County Jail awaiting trial on two counts of first-degree rape and one of unlawful transaction with a minor. The second member accused of rape, who was a juvenile, has been released from a detention center, the woman said.

Burks said Blair claimed the woman was a gang member and was told to either fight someone or have sex with two of the gang members. In an interview, she denied she was ever a gang member.

She said one of the juvenile members of the gang asked her for a ride to the Hunter Ridge Apartments in Jeffersontown. She said she complied and then went inside an apartment there to call her mother, but when she tried to leave, the members held her against her will and two of them raped her.

The boy who used to be in the gang said he was at the apartment at the time of the alleged rape. Because he knew the woman, he said he tried to persuade the leader that she should be the boy's "personal" woman. But the leader wouldn't allow that, forcing him to sit by and let the rape take place, the boy said.

The boy said the incident left him ambivalent about the Folk. But he conceded that if the victim been a stranger, he would have joined in. "I wouldn't have thought twice," he said. "I was so far gone and drinking that night."

The boy said he quit the gang and left the state for a few weeks to escape threats. Members wanted him to help persuade the girl not to prosecute, but he refused.

The boy said the gang leaders generally kept members in line with threats of "seven days of hell" -- in which a member who violated gang rules is held captive and tortured by other members for a week.

The boy said the gang disbanded last spring and he returned to school. He said he now feels closer to his family. He had been in the gang for about six months before his parents, both of whom had jobs, knew anything about his activities.

His 22-year-old brother became suspicious after seeing some of his friends use hand signs at a fast-food restaurant. The brother tried to warn his mother, but she refused to believe him.

"At first I thought it was a lot of braggadocio, bravado," she said. "I don't think I realized or wanted to see any more than I did."

J. Price Foster, a professor of justice administration at the University of Louisville, said parents, teachers and other adults should try to understand "the subculture of kids and the things that matter to them," in order to spot gang activity.

Foster said problems such as failing at school or losing valuable time with parents because of jobs influence how youths choose their friends.

The Jeffersontown boy's mother thinks some of those circumstances played a role in her son's decision to join the Folk.

But the boy said her determination to avoid the truth allowed him to get away with being in a gang. He avoided flaunting money around his parents, and he said he convinced his mother that although she didn't recognize his new clothes, she had bought them on their last shopping trip.

"She doesn't pay attention," he said. "It was so easy."

Caption: Darian L. Blair: Called powerful influence on gang members

Memo:

SECOND OF TWO PARTS; SEE LIBRARY MICROFILM FOR INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC

Graphic:

PHOTO; INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC; SIGNS OF GANGS AND WHERE TO GET HELP

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NewsBank, inc. - The Courier-Journal - 1995 - Article with Citation

Headline: BLUE LICK SUBDIVISIONS HOPE TO CURTAIL YOUNG VANDALS
BLOCK WATCHES AMONG IDEAS URGED TO STOP GANG IN TREASURE
ISLAND, SILVER HEIGHTS

Date: September 13, 1995
Page: 1N

Section: NEIGHBORHOODS
Edition: NEIGHBORHOODS MID COUNTY
Length: 774

Author: PAUL BALDWIN

Index Terms: KENTUCKY
JEFFERSON COUNTY
YOUTH
VANDALISM
CRIME
BURGLARY
ORGANIZATIONS
CHILDREN
SIGNS
CRIME
WEAPONS
HOUSES
LAW ENFORCEMENT
CONVENTIONS
ENERGY

Gang III

Text:

The blue bandanas appeared first. Then, about six months ago, the spray-painted graffiti touting the IGC, for Insane Gangsta' Crips, began showing up on overpasses, schools and other buildings.

Since then, many residents in the Treasure Island and Silver Heights subdivisions off Blue Lick Road say they've been victims of vandalism, burglary and intimidation from what they believe is a budding gang.

More than 400 area residents showed up at Blue Lick Elementary School's auditorium last week to listen to Jefferson County Police discuss how a block-watch system may curtail their problem.

Steve McKenzie, a county police officer, said much of the activity can be attributed to a group of 15 to 30 juveniles led by about eight young adults.

Although the local group has adopted the name, Crips, and worn the signature blue bandanas associated with gangs based in such cities as Los Angeles and Chicago, the local group is not affiliated with them and hasn't been formed to make profits from dealing drugs, McKenzie said.

The group has drawn most of its attention from vandalism, a series of burglaries and a burned-out car. Jefferson County C District Captain Lewis Sharber said several arrests were made three weeks ago in connection with the burglaries.

McKenzie confirmed that police believe two recent drive-by

1-22
shootings, in which shots were fired into residences, were related to a dispute involving the gang.

Shootings in the area are unusual, but resident Stephanie Smith fears one could lead to tragedy.

She and others attribute much of the problem to dysfunctional homes and a lack of activities for youths.

Some residents urged neighbors to watch their children and young friends closely. "People have to realize that it's our children who are doing this," said Jim Vize, who has lived in the area for a year.

Melissa Davis, 17, was one of several teens who said youths don't have enough activities. "We have no place to go. What do they expect us to do?"

Joe Turner, who is helping to push a block-watch effort, said many area churches offer activities for area youths.

Anna Jagers and Cissy McKinley, two mothers who live in the Mountain View apartments, felt that a separate meeting should be held with area youths to see what their concerns are.

"They need to have one of these for the kids," said Jeremy Booher, 15. "The adults aren't going to listen to us here."

McKenzie and fellow officer Dorsey Powell encouraged residents to report any incidents to the police so that an accurate record of vandalism can be kept. Police should also be called to photograph any graffiti before it is removed.

Some residents, including block-watch organizer Jim Riggs, encouraged people at the meeting to turn on their porch lights and ask Louisville Gas & Electric Co. if more street lights could be put in.

Block-watch organizers have also begun to clear a wooded area on Caven Drive between Cutlass Court and Sirate Lane and hope to convert the land into a park. Residents say youths often hang out there.

Turner, who helped distribute about 2,000 notices announcing the Sept. 6 meeting, said he was impressed with the large turnout and hoped the strong showing would mean residents would stay active, including working for a block watch. (For more information on the block watch, call 969-6419 or 969-7124.)

Turner and others also distributed "Treasure Chest," a block-watch publication with the names and numbers of area police officers and tips on reducing crime.

"I think everybody went away feeling better after venting some steam," Turner said. "It's been a good start."

Graphic:

Caption: Larry Herron listened to the discussion during last week's meeting on forming block watches.

Caption: Jefferson County police officer Steve McKenzie addressed the residents as fellow officer Dorsey Powell listened.

Caption: "Not all teen-agers are bad," said Melissa Davis, 17, who addressed the group last week.

Caption: Cindy South asked what to do if people wearing blue bandanas are spotted in the area.

COLOR PHOTOS (4) BY BUD KRAFT

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Accession Number: LVL569828

Headline: Chicago gang wars flare on heels of crackdown

Date: April 8, 1996
Page: 3A

Section: NEWS

Length: 415

Author: AP:ASSOCIATED PRESS

Text:

The three men were shot as they stood beside a car in the dark at a suburban crossroads. Within hours, two more were gunned down in ambushes on Chicago streets. In all, 10 have died.

Authorities say the burst of violence over the past month is a sign that gang warfare of classic Chicago proportions has broken out again.

A federal crackdown on the 10,000-strong Gangster Disciples street gang has caused a power vacuum among its leaders. The result is a brutal struggle as lower-echelon members try to gain control of the gang's lucrative heroin and cocaine trade.

"This thing is market-driven," says George Knox, a Chicago State University gang authority, who says the gang's business can turn ruthless thugs into instant millionaires.

The violence began after the March 6 conviction of eight Gangster Disciples, the first in a federal investigation that has led to the indictment of 39 of the gang's leaders and their associates.

President Clinton is promising Chicago "gang-suppression" funds.

Of the three men killed at a crossroads near Lockport, south of Chicago, on March 31, two were identified by police as Gangster Disciples, one through a gang tattoo and the other because of his arrest record. Police attributed two fatal ambushes in Chicago within 19 hours of the Lockport shootings to gang violence as well.

Knox believes the Gangster Disciples is the nation's largest street gang, active in 35 states and more organized than the Los Angeles-based Crips and Bloods.

Unlike other gangs, they are organized along the lines of a Fortune 500 corporation, with a chairman and board of governors as well as regents who preside over street sales of drugs. Convicted murderer Larry Hoover, who has become almost a household name in Chicago, is under federal indictment on charges of running the gang from his prison cell.

The gang emerged from Chicago's dilapidated Englewood district in the 1960s and gained power while federal prosecutors were busy cracking down on the once dominant El Rukns gang.

Gang warfare has flared on and off in Chicago since the Al Capone era. The Gangster Disciples and El Rukns have had major clashes and so many mini-wars have erupted that one disputed South Side corner is known as "Terror Town."

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Accession Number: LVL13424897

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Headline: Preston is 'focal point' for gangs, police say

Date: August 28, 1996
Page: 2N

Section: NEIGHBORHOODS

Length: 779

Author: BILL PIKE, The Courier-Journal STAFF

Text:

Capt. David Pope of the Jefferson County Police Department was on the spot last week when asked if gangs are active in Okolona and Fairdale.

On one hand, Pope said, he wanted residents to know that gangs have been increasing in recent years; that they're involved in crime; and that Preston Highway is the "focal point" of gang activity in Jefferson County.

On the other hand, he was reluctant to say much because glory-hungry gang members would interpret police attention and a newspaper story as proof that they were heavyweights. "Giving them publicity would be doing them a favor," Pope said. "They would love to read about themselves."

But Pope - who is commander of C District, which includes southern Jefferson County and the Preston Highway corridor - said the public would like to read about them too.

It's important "that the public realize that gangs exist, and they're engaged in criminal activity," Pope said. "But the crimes are low-level. It's not like we're in a gang war zone that would endanger Joe Citizen."

The fact that gangs, made up of teen-agers and young adults, exist is news to many area residents, said Officer Cherie Smith, one of the district's gang coordinators. "You tell people that, and you open their eyes."

Smith recently opened some eyes very wide when she told the Okolona Business and Professional Association about gangs in the area.

"We were dumbfounded," said Terri Stewart, president of the association. "We didn't realize the situation had escalated or was so widespread. We were very surprised. A lot of our members were wondering about what turned out to be gang graffiti."

Pope said "gang wannabes" began evolving into the real thing four or five years ago as members turned to crime. "They were committing burglaries, thefts, that sort of thing. But they have never seemed to be selling drugs the way gangs are in some big cities. The only drugs they have seem to be for their own use."

The most serious crimes involving gangs are drive-by shootings. "It's usually a gang-vs.-gang situation," Pope said. "Usually they're fighting over turf."

Pope estimated that there could be a dozen gangs in his district.

1-27
"They have, say, 20 to 50 members" each, Smith said. "Their ages would be 14 to 25. After that, they either grow up or end up in prison."

Young teen-agers join gangs because it gives them status. "They do it for glory and self-esteem," Pope said. "All of a sudden a kid has an opportunity to have friends who will take care of him and make money. People in school know not to mess with you."

Smith nodded. "At first, it seems a sweet picture. Then they want you to commit a crime. You might want to get out then, but they won't let you."

Gangs use their "colors" to identify themselves, Smith said. Colors can involve clothes, tattoos or bandanas.

Smith and Pope emphasized that the gangs are fluid. "Those numbers could change in a couple of days," Pope said. Gangs often merge, break away, re-form or move activities to other parts of the county. He also said that gangs are not concentrated in the tough parts of town, as many people expect. "That's wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong. They come from all walks of life, and they include all races and all backgrounds."

Young women belong to many gangs, Smith said. She added that some gangs are integrated, while others are all-white or all-black.

Regardless of their makeup, many gangs like to cruise Preston Highway on Friday and Saturday nights with other young people. "Preston is the hangout spot," Smith said.

The concentration of young people every weekend on Preston makes the district the center of gang activity in the county, Pope said. "Our district has more of it than anybody."

The police try to stay on top of gangs by monitoring them. Smith and Juan Garrett, the district's other gang coordinator, collect intelligence on gangs, record names and other information about them in a computer, and stay in touch with the community and other police jurisdictions.

Pope said the department is determined to keep gangs from getting into sophisticated crime, as they've done in Los Angeles and other big cities. "We're going to pressure them and crimp their style and let them know we're here."

"On a scale of one to 10, I'd say our gang problem is a two. In L.A., it's a 10. We're going to keep ours down."

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Accession Number: LVL13455578

Graffiti-intelligence work yields results

Walls can talk if investigators know the codes

By CLIFFORD KRAUSS
The New York Times

NEW YORK — While patrolling a stretch of gang-contested turf in East Harlem recently, two police officers spotted two fresh blotches of graffiti on a wall of Public School 149-207.

Most people might have viewed the scribbles — "HMC BK RTC" doo-dled over "Hit Squad Blood Gang 4 Life BRIMS" — as nothing more than annoying vandalism. But to Officers Robert Cekada and Anthony Gonzalez, the graffiti spelled trouble.

"RTC stands for the Rolling Thirties sect of the Crips," Cekada noted. "This means the Crips came by and said you are in Crip turf. Just this kind of cross-out can cause a confrontation and someone could get killed."

To avert any violence, Cekada said he and his anti-gang unit would canvass the neighborhood, trying to identify "HMC," "BK" and "BRIMS" — the "tags" left by the vandals. Then, police will try to arrest them for writing the graffiti and lecture them to cool their tempers.

New York City police have been arresting graffiti vandals since the early 1970s, when a handful of teen-agers began treating the subway system as a fresco in progress.

But as graffiti writing has evolved in recent years from street doodles to advertisements for drugs and guns and gang codes to mark off turf, law enforcement agencies have begun treating graffiti as evidence.

Which, when properly decoded, can solve robberies, assaults and even murders.

Just as sophisticated eavesdropping such as wiretapping has been used to infiltrate organized crime, so too can we gather intelligence about what youth gangs and graffiti vandals are up to by looking at what they are saying on the wall or storefront gate.

District Attorney Richard Brown said. Police and law-enforcement agencies across the country are putting people and money into graffiti intelligence work and are getting results. Seven of the 17 arson arrests made

after fires in housing project stairwells this year were based on graffiti evidence.

Thirty graffiti arrests over the past year in the Gowanus Houses project in Brooklyn led to the recruitment of two informers who have led police to several top drug dealers. The investigations also allowed the police to

close down several apartments used for drug selling.

Graffiti interpretation has helped the police find and arrest leaders of the Latin Kings gang, and it is a crucial element in police investigations into new Mexican gang activity.

And swastika sightings around the city that once befuddled the department's Bias Incident Investigating Unit are now being turned over to police graffiti experts who specialize in analyzing scrawling styles.

As part of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's "quality of life" campaign, the Police Department has established a new citywide anti-graffiti unit of 26 patrol officers, and has added 36 offi-

cers and detectives to the 45 already assigned to the housing and transit vandalism units. When the new Citywide Anti-Gang Enforcement Unit was formed in June, the department assigned three of its best graffiti investigators to the squad to improve intelligence gathering.

Anti-graffiti efforts have gone high-tech in recent months, with the squads using long-range video and audio equipment to track suspects.

And the transit vandalism unit is monitoring international graffiti artists who are messaging each other on the Internet with advice on techniques and even maps of subway stations.

Recognizing its importance, the Police Department has escalated graffiti arrests, with 1,180 in the first nine months of 1996 after 1,181 in all of 1995. Department officials said some of the arrests had led to dozens of additional robbery and assault arrests as well as a few murder arrests.

An investigation into the murder of a livery cab driver in Harlem last winter was going nowhere until detectives discovered that graffiti found on a wall near the murder scene matched graffiti markings left in the bathroom of a Yonkers bar where the victim had driven to pick up several youths the night he was robbed and killed. Three graffiti specialists recognized the tags, and two arrests were made.

Police have begun treating graffiti as evidence that can solve robberies, assaults and even murders.

Headline: Graffiti-intelligence work yields results
Walls can talk if investigators know the codes

Date: October 6, 1996
Page: 15A

Section: NEWS

Length: 732

Author: CLIFFORD KRAUSS NYT:NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Text:

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7-30
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And the transit vandalism unit is monitoring international graffiti artists who are messaging each other on the Internet with advice on techniques and even maps of subway stations.

Recognizing its importance, the Police Department has escalated graffiti arrests, with 1,180 in the first nine months of 1996 after 1,181 in all of 1995. Department officials said some of the arrests had led to dozens of additional robbery and assault arrests as well as a few murder arrests.

An investigation into the murder of a livery cab driver in Harlem last winter was going nowhere until detectives discovered that graffiti found on a wall near the murder scene matched graffiti markings left in the bathroom of a Yonkers bar where the victim had driven to pick up several youths the night he was robbed and killed. Three graffiti specialists recognized the tags, and two arrests were made.

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NewsBank, inc. - The Courier-Journal - 1996 - Article with Citation

Headline: A SPECIAL REPORT

'BUTTER' AND HIS BOYS

How a modern-day Fagin and his band of lost youths engineered their own countywide crime spree

Date: October 20, 1996

Section: NEWS

Page: 1A

Length: 3043

Author: JIM ADAMS, The Courier-Journal STAFF

Gangs - [scribbles]

Text:

It's hard to hear it without cringing: ``Insane Gangster Crips.'' If not insane, it's certainly inane. And juvenile - which also describes a good many of its members.

For years, in the aftermath of many a crime around Louisville, the same question (Was it ``gang-related'') has drawn the same answer (Police ``are investigating'').

But there is no question about the group of teen-agers known to each other as ``I.G.C.'' They dress like gangsters; they choose their tattoos like gangsters; and at least eight of them now are facing the music, in court, like gangsters. Most of them call themselves gang members.

One string of burglaries late last year stretching from the Highlands to Hillview - money and property totaling more than \$40,000, stolen a pocketful at a time - is connected to this single group of teen-agers. These burglaries involved the theft of an unknown number of guns, most of them still ``on the street.''

The stakes escalated earlier this year when some of the same burglars committed at least four armed robberies. Finally, there came an extremely grave gunshot injury during a robbery - a heartless attack in which two ``I.G.C.'' members (and two other young men, at least one a teen-age member of a similar gang) are charged with attempted murder.

In these ways and more, teen-age boys spent their nights taking things that didn't belong to them and leaving behind a great deal of cold, hard damage. That is easy to see.

Add to the \$40,000 in reported losses the cost of property damaged during the break-ins; the cost of the police, court, jail and prison exertions that resulted; and the medical costs of the wounded clerk; and society's bill for the brief crime wave mounts into six figures.

More difficult for a community to explore is the chemistry that created this behavior in the first place:

- At the center, allegedly, was Richard L. Bloyd Sr., a middle-aged sod cutter and once-convicted pot dealer whose somewhat blimpish proportions have earned him the nickname ``Butter,' as in ``butter ball.' The teen-age gangsters just call him ``Butta.'

Two teen-agers - one speaking to police, one to The

1-32

Courier-Journal - said they took guns they stole in burglaries to Bloyd.

Two also have said that, at ages 15 and 17, they gave Bloyd money in exchange for a place to live, and one told the newspaper that, while he was a runaway, he gave Bloyd the proceeds of marijuana he sold.

Meanwhile, that boy said, Bloyd shielded him from his father, who went to Bloyd's home repeatedly, trying unsuccessfully to find his son.

Jefferson Circuit Judge Ken Corey, in open court, said Bloyd's activities sound like those of "a modern-day Fagin," and the attorney representing the runaway boy agreed. "Right out of Charles Dickens," Pete Schuler said. "I would agree with that assessment totally."

Bloyd has been charged under a state criminal syndication law. However, even with the testimony of these teen-agers, the case appears to have problems, and there seems to be a reasonable chance that he might beat it - a reasonable chance that he will slide through the system's fingers, like melting butter.

- At or near the center of this mixture was a ninth-grade dropout named Kenneth E. Mink, who is now 19 years old.

Mink, the leader of the Insane Gangster Crips, learned his art from the company he kept while living on the north side of Miami two to three years ago. "He saw the real gang stuff in Miami, and I think he brought a little bit of that back here," said Billy Stivers, a Jefferson County police burglary detective who worked on the I.G.C. case.

"They're doing all the same activities here the big gangs do - shooting, robbery, burglary," Stivers said, with about the only major difference seeming to be that the members of I.G.C. kept what they stole for themselves rather than contributing their profits to other gang activities. "But that's a real small variation that could change overnight," he said.

Stivers thinks boys joined Mink's gang because they thought it was cool.

In two recent interviews, Mink said he didn't have much dealing with Bloyd, although he and members of I.G.C. habitually hung around Bloyd's home, and 17-year-old Richard L. Bloyd Jr. is, Mink said, a member of the gang.

- Drugs fueled a good bit of the criminal activity. When Stivers, the county detective, asked young gang burglars if they were afraid of getting caught or shot while breaking into homes, they told him marijuana eased their fears. In addition, Schuler's 16-year-old client - Nicholas Wittry, the boy who said he sold marijuana - said pot was often lying around Bloyd's apartment during the months he was living there, as much as a pound at a time.

- A surprisingly large group of teen-agers seemed to live outside the influence of their parents. During the months of the crime wave, even in the early morning hours, it was not unusual for as many as a dozen teen-agers to be hanging around Bloyd's small apartment behind a restaurant on Preston Highway in Okolona. One, Steve McWilliams, who was 17, said he paid Bloyd \$50 a week for a room where he, his girlfriend and their baby could sleep. "I had nowhere else to go," said McWilliams, who still seems appreciative of Bloyd's willingness to take them in.

1-33

When Lynn Crain, Bloyd's former wife, came back into his home on Preston Highway last winter, she said she was stunned by how many teen-agers were hanging around at late hours. "Where are their parents?" she said she immediately wondered.

- As a result, their models for behavior became each other. "A young person's peer group is the most powerful source of identity," said Schuler, who is the chief defense attorney for juveniles in the Public Defender's office in Jefferson County.

Some teen-agers who were considered to be good kids succumbed - including one who had never been in trouble before and who was ranked 57th in his high school class of 202 on the day, two weeks ago, when he was taken from court in handcuffs to begin serving seven years in prison for his role in five burglaries.

Ritual 'beating-in' a brutal initiation

Several weeks ago, on a warm September day, a shirtless Kenneth E. Mink answered a knock at his apartment door at 7411 Egypt Lane in Okolona, stuffed his hands into the front pockets of drooping jeans, and said, in response to a question, that it is "sort of" correct that he is the head of a gang.

He had a pimply complexion and the letters I, G and C tattooed on his right shoulder blade.

Mink said there are plenty of suburban gangs, with names like Aces High, South Side Crips, Gangster Disciples, Black Dragon Society and Family Crips. County police over the past year have regarded Mink and I.G.C. as one of the largest.

Mink claimed his gang, at last count, had 159 members - 159 young people who submitted to the ritual "beating-in." As Mink and other participants explained this initiation, a prospective gang member is blindfolded with a blue bandana, spun around six times inside a circle of six gang members, and is expected to fight back as he is beaten with fists for six minutes.

Some who say they have witnessed this - including teen-agers Steve McWilliams and Nicholas Wittry, Bloyd's former tenants on Preston - describe them as violent affairs in which the new members suffer such injuries as broken noses and blackened eyes. Outrageous as it sounds, county police patrol officers, as well as detectives in the Special Investigations Unit, confirm that such "beating-ins" occur. Special Investigations believes it is indeed possible that I.G.C. has inducted more than 100 members this way, as Mink claims.

Apparently no prosecutions for assault have resulted from this ritual, nor have any injuries more serious than broken bones.

Wittry, who is 16, said he witnessed about a dozen such beatings, most at Okolona Park off Preston Highway near Outer Loop, and all at night. He said he never submitted to one and never entered the gang because the price of membership seemed too steep. "It's stupid," he said.

But, as if he needed to prove his story on his own doorstep, Mink disappeared into his apartment and returned with a thick photograph album, the vinyl-bound kind that grandmothers everywhere keep nearby.

1-34
Mink's album was full of snapshots, too, but most were of teen-agers posing dressed in blue, some with bandanas covering their faces, some holding pistols and shotguns across their chests.

'Guns just always seemed to come up'

Nicholas Wittry is a thin, courteous, unsmiling young man who explains his life conditions in uncomplicated, summary terms: School was boring. He thought his parents were too strict.

So he ran away from his Okolona home about this time last year, and the gravity of a garage-like apartment behind The Daffy Diner, at 8102 Preston Highway, pulled him in. The apartment, home of 42-year-old Richard Lee Bloyd, had become a popular hangout for Okolona teen-agers. Many of them, like Wittry, were acquaintances of Bloyd's own teen-age children. (Bloyd no longer lives at that address.)

Wittry, at one point in a recent interview, said Bloyd was charging him \$40 a week for meals and a couch to sleep on. At the same time, Wittry said, Bloyd was charging his friend McWilliams \$50 a week - he, his girlfriend and their child got their own bedroom for that amount - and another teen-ager was paying to live there, too.

Both Wittry and McWilliams said in interviews that, without jobs, the main reason they began stealing was to pay Bloyd the rent.

Pressed on that, however, Wittry acknowledged that he might have begun stealing, anyway - he had been involved in one earlier burglary without getting caught, he said, and others hanging around Bloyd's apartment already were committing burglaries.

Several of these boys say they were primarily after money, but, as Mink put it, ``guns just always seemed to come up.'' Wittry, for example, said he once found 15 pistols in a single home and took them. He also was involved in burglaries at the homes of two of his relatives late last year - including his grandparents', where seven guns were stolen, one an heirloom .22-caliber rifle that once belonged to Wittry's great-grandfather. That gun has never been recovered.

Guns sell on the street - from \$50 for a small pistol to as much as \$350 for an expensive .44-caliber.

Sometimes, two teen-agers have said, Bloyd would get the weapons they stole. Wittry said in an interview that he sold about 10 stolen guns to Bloyd. And 18-year-old Brett Smith - who has admitted involvement in five burglaries - said in a written statement to police:

``I went over to Butter's house to get rid of the guns. He called some people and he said he could get rid of two of them. The rifle and the shotgun. So I said OK.'' Smith told police he had traded another gun - an M-90 semiautomatic pistol - for marijuana to someone named Red because Red had told him that ``it's only worth about \$100 stolen.''

'He should not

have been indicted'

After a recent court appearance, Richard Bloyd Sr., dressed in denim overalls and a white T-shirt, briefly defended himself against the teen-agers' descriptions of his conduct: He worked long hours, he said,

1-35
and did not know the teen-agers were committing burglaries. He denied charging Wittry and McWilliams regular rent, but he added that he did have to buy food for them.

Bloyd's attorney, G. Murray Turner, who was accompanying him, added that police searched Bloyd's apartment and found no stolen property. Turner also said he is advising Bloyd not to talk publicly until charges against him are resolved. ``I think he would very much like to tell his side of the story,' ' Turner said, ``but it's not in his interest right now.' '

Turner also said that the state criminal syndication statute under which Bloyd is charged does not appear to apply to him. Bloyd's co-defendants - Mink, McWilliams and Smith - have pleaded guilty to burglaries, and burglary is not one of the crimes to which the syndicate charge can apply, Turner said.

``They don't have a syndication case,' ' Turner said. ``He should not have been indicted. . . . I doubt very seriously if these allegations will hold up.' '

The prosecutor in Bloyd's case, Joe Gutmann, disagreed, saying that the criminal syndication statute does cover theft offenses. Also, given testimony of some of the teen-agers, a grand jury might be asked to consider different charges against Bloyd, such as unlawful transaction with a minor.

``I'm ready to get

my black heart'

Allen L. Porter Jr., 25, was working the counter alone, talking to a friend on the phone, when the full, tragic extension of the pseudo-gangster lifestyle walked into the door of the BP Oil station at 7723 Bardstown Road. It was 2:25 a.m. last June 25.

Police now believe that the two who entered the store were Kenneth Conrad Flood, then 19 years old and a member of a (gang) called Folk, and Nicholas H. Boston, then 16 years old and identified as a member of I.G.C. Standing outside the door as ``look-out,' ' police have been told, was 17-year-old Richard L. Bloyd Jr., Butter's son.

The driver of the car, 20-year-old Ricky Page, told police that Flood was carrying a .38-caliber pistol and that Bloyd had a .45. The police report of the interview with Page says: ``Nick (Boston) told him (Page) that he had stolen the .45 automatic out of a house (address unknown).'

When Flood returned to the car, he told Page: ``I'm ready to get my black heart under my eye, I shot that m---- f----.' ' The black heart is a gang tattoo.

In the following days, Flood would tell several people that he ``lost it' ' and fired twice when the clerk, Porter, scoffed at his demand for money.

``Yeah, I'm true to myself and I'm not a punk,' ' Flood was quoted in a police report as saying to a friend. ``I was just letting everybody know that I'm not a punk.' '

Porter nearly died of his wounds in the face and chest, and four

1-36
months after the shooting he remains in University of Louisville Hospital.

Flood, Boston, Bloyd Jr. and Page are charged with attempted murder and armed robbery.

Echoes of their crimes continued to be heard

It is undeniable that there are many family tragedies spinning off from this. Brett Smith, for example, had been a football player at Southern High School, a kid whose academic transcript contained plenty of As and Bs. "I'm really sorry I messed up. I ruined my life," he told Judge Ken Corey on Sept. 30.

Some in the courtroom viewed Smith - who attended school regularly and had an after-school job - as a good candidate for probation, but Corey wasn't buying that. Had Smith been involved in a single burglary, probation would be an option, Corey said. But with five, "you don't make it," he said flatly.

Corey gave Smith the seven-year sentence contained in his plea agreement but also recommended him for the state's "boot camp" prison program, which could qualify him for early parole next year. To the rasping sound of handcuffs tightening there in the courtroom, Smith's senior year of high school came to an ignominious halt.

Similarly, Nicholas Wittry's parents seem unusually nurturing and close to him, in the view of Schuler, the boy's attorney. Wittry has spent nine of the past 10 months in the Jefferson County Youth Center, observing both Christmas and his 16th birthday surrounded by the hollow, echoing sounds of keys and metal doors.

In Wittry, Schuler sees the convergence of several problems in juvenile justice today: With increasing numbers of 14- to 17-year-olds being tried in adult court under tougher state laws, more teen-agers are sitting longer in confinement, awaiting treatment services they may not get.

While Wittry continues to attend 21/2 hours of school daily at Jefferson County Youth Center, he said he spends most of his days unoccupied - a formula disastrous for adolescents, Schuler said. Basically, the boy "has lost a year" at a critical time in his development, he said.

Impacts of his crimes, however, continue. For example, Wittry said he kept a .25-caliber pistol, one of the guns stolen from his grandparents' home, for about two weeks after that burglary, until the day he removed it from his pocket and stuck it in a drawer at Bloyd's apartment before taking a shower. When he got out of the shower, the gun was gone, and he never saw it again, Wittry said.

Police did, however. Louisville Officer Danny Glidewell took the pistol off a 15-year-old boy three weeks after it was stolen - and charged the 15-year-old with using it in a robbery-kidnapping of a 24-year-old woman in the Parkway Place housing complex.

How the pistol traveled from the drawer where Wittry said he put it to the hands of the teen-ager in Parkway Place has never been determined.

Disbanding members joining other gangs?

1-3
1-37

There is some question whether the Insane Gangster Crips is still in existence. Steve Bailey, a county police officer with some gang contacts, recently said some I.G.C. members have told him the gang is breaking up and its members joining other gangs.

Bailey, who has seen indications of gang-type activity increase in the Okolona area he patrols, worries that it's a problem on the verge of mushrooming. But there's still time, he said, to keep gangs from becoming a dominant influence in the county.

Mink, in another interview recently at the county jail, professed a conversion. His gangster days are behind him, he said.

But, he said, I.G.C. still exists.

Graphic:

Richard L. Bloyd Sr., a k a ``Butter'' (COLOR PHOTO)

Kenneth E. Mink, leader of I.G.C.; Steve McWilliams, burglar

INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC; MAP BY JOANNE MESHEW, THE COURIER-JOURNAL THAT SHOWS THE CRIME SPREE (SEE LIBRARY MICROFILM)

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Headline: EVIDENCE OF GANG ACTIVITY?

Date: December 16, 1996
Page: 10A

Section: FORUM

Length: 435

Author: READER

Text:

In 1991, I returned to my hometown of Louisville from Sacramento, Calif. My eight years of living in the Golden State certainly taught me many things: (1) The coasts are five years ahead of Louisville. (2) People do move faster on either coast. (3) Being on the cutting edge sometimes means you get cut.

The rash of senseless violence, increase in murder rates, and increase in nonviolent crimes such as burglary all strongly resemble Sacramento around 1990. At that time, gangs were moving into that sleepy little city after infiltrating the larger cities of California. Gang members and their drug-related activities were responsible for the increase in violence, murders and burglaries. New recruits would prove loyalty to their gang by robbing or murdering someone, usually an uninvolved and innocent citizen.

Evidence of gang activity was also evident by spray-painted graffiti they left "markings" their territory. Road signs at off-ramps of interstates would suddenly have strange markings on it. Sides of buildings, residential wooden fences, school buildings, dumpsters at apartment complexes - all would be targets for gangs to announce to their rivals that they "owned" that area, city, subdivision or complex.

Now in 1996, five years later and right on schedule, I have observed Louisville's rise in crime and violence. At the same time, I see the gang name "Crips" spray-painted on the Belvedere as you drive eastward on I-64 (it appeared before Derby '96). I see strange spray-painted markings on overpasses, on road signs on Breckinridge Lane leading to St. Matthews, and appearing on sides of buildings that have never had a graffiti problem.

Our Mayor, Board of Aldermen, and county officials would serve our community well by contacting Sacramento officials and learning what gang activity did to the quality of life in that community before Louisville repeats Sacramento's story. Once a lovely and peaceful community, Sacramento became covered in graffiti, experienced gang violence usually associated with larger cities and lost the charm and beauty it once enjoyed. . . .

I fear Joyce Skees' death is just part of some gang member's rite of initiation and that other senseless acts will follow. Let's learn from Sacramento's mistakes and nip the gang problem here and now.

MARY JANE SHADOWEN

Shepherdsville, Ky. 40165

Graphic:

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN OVERMYER (SEE LIBRARY MICROFILM)

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Accession Number: LVL16013163

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1-39

Headline: Jefferson leaders say gangs emerging in county

Date: February 9, 1997

Section: NEWS

Page: 1B

Length: 661

Author: KIM WESSEL, The Courier-Journal STAFF

Text:

If you see 973 spray-painted on the back of a stop sign, it means something.

If you see BK scrawled across the wall, it means something.

If you see someone with a bandana hanging out of his left pocket, it means something.

It means there are gangs.

"For a long time, we didn't want to talk about gangs," Jefferson Commonwealth's Attorney Dave Stengel said yesterday. "We didn't want to give them any recognition. We didn't want to give them any credibility. But they're there, all over the county. And now we have to acknowledge them."

And figure out what to do about them.

That's what some 250 people, mostly neighborhood leaders, came to learn yesterday at a forum on youth violence and gangs sponsored by the Jefferson County Association of Neighbors at Southern High School.

A panel of community leaders spent more than three hours discussing how the problem came to be and what can be done about it.

"We haven't had the kind of problem that the big cities have," Jefferson County Judge-Executive Dave Armstrong said. "The crack cocaine. The gangs. We always thought, 'Sure they're in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, anywhere but Louisville.'"

Gangs first emerged in Jefferson County about two years ago, Police Chief Ron Ricucci said, mostly along Preston Highway. He said that some "gangs" are really just groups of people committing petty crimes, not the violent groups that declare war on each other.

Ricucci said he thinks gangs are still emerging here, but it's happening throughout the county, not just in certain parts.

"No place is immune," Ricucci said.

And there are signs. Some of them were displayed on a large, graffiti-covered board yesterday. The letters I-G-C, or the numbers 9-7-3, for example, stand for Insane Gangster Crips. B-K is for Blood Killers.

People who wear clothing a certain way belong to a certain gang. They

1-41
pull their right pants leg up to their knee, they leave a bandana hanging out of their pocket, they turn their hat slightly to the left.

Kids are drawn to gangs for several reasons, said George Unseld, director of Neighborhood Place: a sense of adventure, a feeling of belonging, a lack of something to do, and little support from the family.

"All of the above," he said. "Gangs will accept youngsters much more quickly than will society. They have lower standards."

Gangs wouldn't be around if kids didn't join them, and they wouldn't join them if they had other things to do, like play basketball or work, Unseld said.

Several speakers mentioned parents' responsibility in keeping their children out of gangs. They said parents need to be available for their children, make them feel good about themselves, keep track of them. It's not entirely up to the police.

"We need the help of the community," Ricucci said. "We need parents to get involved with their kids, to know where they are, what they're doing."

From the community to the courtroom, there are ways to rid the county of the gangs, speakers said. Joyce Korfhage, head of the Cane Run Area Neighborhood Association, said people have to get organized.

"The gangs are organizing," she said. "We have to be organizing better, stronger."

Jim Miller, juvenile court prosecutor, said the philosophy of the courtroom has to change.

"We have a tendency to turn the other cheek," he said. "We allow juveniles too many bites of the apple. They need to be held accountable the first time they take a bite. The courts must deal with them swiftly and immediately."

Speaking against a backdrop of gang symbols at yesterday's forum was Jefferson County juvenile court prosecutor Jim Miller

Graphic:

BY PAUL SCHUHMANN, THE COURIER-JOURNAL

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Headline: NEW ALBANY

Gang signs, hail of lead-alarm police
They see them as signs Crips, Bloods coming

Date: February 10, 1997

Section: NEWS

Page: 1B

Length: 857

Author: BEN Z. HERSHBERG, The Courier-Journal STAFF

Text:

No one was injured in the shower of bullets that tore up a car parked in the Broadmeade housing project in New Albany on Jan. 31 late at night. But the incident worried police.

For one thing, it involved powerful guns, said police Officer Bryan Couch, who arrested two young men and a young woman in the drive-by shooting. Two .45-caliber semiautomatic pistols and a semiautomatic rifle were confiscated. Police also found 9mm shell casings in the area, Couch said.

Even more alarming, Couch said, was the small, blue-and-white bandanna he found neatly folded and tied around a seat belt in his suspects' car.

Such bandannas often are associated with a gang called the Crips, Couch said. The respect with which the two young men he arrested treated the bandanna suggests it was an important symbol for them.

Sgt. Mike Helm, a New Albany police expert on gangs, agreed with Couch about the significance of the Jan. 31 incident. They believe the drive-by shooting, one of four or five similar incidents in the last month and a half, suggests gang activity is increasing in Southern Indiana.

If it continues, the drugs, beatings and thefts that have attended the growth of gangs in other cities will come with it, they say.

"I don't think it's widespread yet," said Couch. "But it's coming."

Helm agreed.

One early sign is some of the unusual graffiti he's seen in New Albany in the last year or two, Helm said.

To an untrained observer, a simply drawn, often upside-down crown might not mean anything but poor drawing skills. But the symbol often is an insignia used to mark an area one gang sees as its turf, Helm said.

He's seen such graffiti on the old K&I Bridge, on New Albany's riverfront and as recently as last Friday it was reported on a metal shed on Culbertson Avenue near Thomas Street. He removes the graffiti when he finds it to prevent it from becoming a provocation, Helm said.

If the graffiti is an early sign of gang activity in New Albany, then the spate of drive-by shootings at parked cars may be a second, more intense stage, Helm said.

Couch's report on his Jan. 31 arrests supports Helm's view.

In the report, Couch says a male walked up to the scene when he was making the arrests and ``leered'' at the three young people in custody. The woman he'd arrested, Christina Cash, 18, of English, said the man had ``put a gun to her head the night before.'' The shot-up car apparently belonged to the man, Couch said in his report; he didn't report the man's name.

Referring to three people he had arrested, Couch said, ``all persons in the vehicle apparently had knowledge of what was going to happen, as it was apparently some kind of gang insult being returned.''

Cash and Demetrius Bell, 23, and Durane Massey, 18, both of Louisville, were charged with criminal gang activity, illegal possession of a handgun and criminal recklessness. A juvenile was arrested later.

Despite the shootings and the arrests, several young men who live in the neighborhood said they don't believe gangs are a problem.

``I don't think it's so much gangs,'' 19-year-old Larry Jones said as he walked along Bono Boulevard on Thursday with three companions. ``It's drugs out here; that's the problem.''

Bobby Sutton, who was walking with Jones, said he didn't know of any gangs in the area, either.

Friends might associate in small groups, as they were, Sutton said, but such groups are ``cliques,'' not gangs.

Helm also said New Albany's young people tend not to be involved with gangs. But some young people who have moved to the area from larger cities, including Louisville, have brought a gang culture or behavior with them, he said.

The concern isn't bound by race, sex or geographic area, Helm said.

``Most of the gangs we have dealt with have been white,'' Helm said.

To stem what could become a dangerous tide, Helm is working with the Floyd County Gang and Cult Task Force, along with representatives of the school system, the probation department, Child Protection Services and others. They share information and ideas about how to prevent gangs from getting rooted in New Albany, Helm said.

He and others also talk to groups of students about gangs and their dangers, Helm said. And he warns parents to be aware of the risks to their children.

If youngsters begin wearing gang-type clothing - such as Starter jackets in the blue and white often associated with the Crips or the red associated with the Bloods - it's not time to panic, Helm said. But it probably is time to ask whom the youngsters are associating with and what they're doing in their free time.

The West Side Crips gang members flash a hand sign, above, to each other

Graphic:

1-44
PHOTOS BY BEN HERSHBERG, THE C-J; New Albany police Sgt. Mike Helm said that he believes gang activity is on the increase.

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Headline: Louisville makes war on graffiti
Gang symbols, other eyesores polished off by painting crew

Date: February 20, 1997 Section: NEWS
Page: 1B
Length: 601

Author: RICK McDONOUGH, The Courier-Journal STAFF

Text:

A generation ago, according to Simon and Garfunkel, the words of the prophets were written on the subway walls.

Today, the music is different and so is some of the graffiti. Gang symbols that encourage violent turf battles and drug use are among the messages found spray-painted around Louisville.

"When we were kids, graffiti was simply childish vandalism with no meaning other than the silliness of the moment," said Mayor Jerry Abramson, who's 50.

When he declared a local war on crime last week, Abramson said graffiti would be one of his targets.

A new graffiti-removal team was in Butchertown yesterday - its second day on the job - painting over messages and markings along the flood wall.

Aside from removing gang symbols, getting rid of graffiti can improve residents' attitudes toward their neighborhoods and make them feel safer, according to crime-fighting theories that have been adopted in recent years by big-city police departments across the country.

Bernice Phillips, who works with teen-agers at the Clarksdale public housing complex, urged Abramson to attack graffiti. She said painted gang messages are found all over the city, even on the inside walls of the public laundry room at Clarksdale.

"In big letters it says, 'Kill the crips. We're the bloods,' " she said. "If you take a lot of that away, the kids won't be as attracted to the gangs."

The city's anti-graffiti team consists of Fred Woods and Lee Corley, two longtime Public Works employees. They moved quickly yesterday, dipping rollers into five-gallon buckets of beige latex paint. In just seconds, big orange letters that said "Butchertown Girls" and "Hey you come 'ear? Dude" were gone.

So was a crude version of a Dallas Mavericks logo and the declaration of Bo's love for Timmy.

Left behind was a splotchy gray and beige abstract.

Public Works Director Bill Herron said the city's low-tech graffiti-removal method may be replaced after he has time to test some high-powered sprays and chemical solutions.

Herron said neither he nor the anti-graffiti team has made any effort to become experts in gangs or their symbols. That's because they don't care what the message is. ``Our objective is to cover the graffiti.''

Construction worker Mark Mercer, who watched the progress of Woods and Corley from inside a chain-link fence at Abel Construction Co., 820 Water St., predicted that their efforts would go for naught. ``That will just give 'em a background to write on,' he said of the newly painted surface.

Herron said the city is committed to removing graffiti within 48 hours after it's reported to CityCALL (574-3333).

``Let's hope no one comes back,' he said. ``But if they do, we'll be back right behind them.''

But not too aggressively. Recently in Albuquerque, N.M., an anti-graffiti team got overly zealous and inadvertently whitewashed a \$15,000 mural that the city had commissioned. ``I don't think we will make that mistake,' Herron said.

Fred Woods, a worker for the city of Louisville's Public Works Department, rolled a coat of paint over graffiti on the flood wall in Butchertown yesterday

Graphic:

PHOTOS BY BILL LUSTER, THE COURIER-JOURNAL; A pillar supporting Interstate 64 at 27th Street bore the marks of a spray-paint artist. The area is near Lannan Park.

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