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A Loss of traditions : the emergence of American Indian youth gangs

Julie A. Hailer
San Jose State University

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**A LOSS OF TRADITIONS: THE EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH
GANGS**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Administration of Justice Department

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

By

Julie A. Hailer

December, 1998

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Baroody Hart', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Cynthia Baroody Hart

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Inger Sagatun-Edwards', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Inger Sagatun Edwards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Roy Roberg', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Roy Roberg

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'William Fish', written over a horizontal line.

ABSTRACT

A LOSS OF TRADITIONS: THE EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH GANGS

By Julie A. Hailer

While there has been much research and academic literature on existing ethnic gangs, there is a dearth of academic literature on American Indian gangs. This research seeks to fill the void of information and knowledge of these emerging American Indian gangs as well as to ascertain whether current Indian gangs are becoming problematic on the reservations nationally. The primary data source utilized were surveys sent to law enforcement officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs-Law Enforcement Divisions and Tribal Police Departments across the country. The findings will show: (1) which reservations are experiencing gang activity; (2) characteristics of current American Indian gangs; and, (3) an examination of Indian Country's law enforcement response to gangs on their respective reservations.

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Table of Contents

Chapter I	Introduction.....	1
Chapter II	Literature Review	3
Chapter III	Research Method	34
Chapter IV	Findings	43
Chapter VI	Summary And Conclusions	67
<i>References</i>		77
<i>Appendix A</i>	Pilot Study Questionnaire	81
<i>Appendix B</i>	Final Survey Questionnaire	88

List Of Tables

Table 1	Responses By States	40
Table 2	Most Pressing Law Enforcement Problem On the Reservation	45
Table 3	Distance From Nearest Urban Center	49
Table 4	Highest Crime Problems	50
Table 5	Gang Formation Reasons	52
Table 6	Factors for the Absence of Gangs	53
Table 7	Crime Categories	57
Table 8	Violent Crimes	58
Table 9	Observed Increase in Weapons	58
Table 10	Reasons for Joining Gangs	59
Table 11	Perceived Levels of Gang Activity	59
Table 12	Programs	65
Table 13	Respondents Solutions	66

Table Of Figures

Figure 1	Respondents by State	43
Figure 2	States With Reported Gang Activity	46
Figure 3	Year Gangs Noticed	54

Chapter I Introduction

Juvenile gang activity is a modern day fact of life. We hear about the senseless violence by young people in gangs on television and read about it in our daily newspapers. Newspaper articles have reported that gang activity has now spread to the American Indian reservations and is of a growing concern (Mydans, 1995; Dial, 1995; and more recently, Clark, 1996; Porterfield, 1997 and Rooks, 1997).

There is a dearth of information in the academic literature with respect to Indian crime in general and American Indian gangs specifically. The purpose of this research is to provide information on American Indian gangs on the reservations across the country. This is accomplished by an exploratory study of: (1) the extent of gang activity on the reservations nation wide; (2) characteristics of the current American Indian gangs; and, (3) an examination of Indian Country's law enforcement response to gangs on their respective reservations.¹

There has been a lack of attention and research in the area of American

¹ It is important to understand the definition of Indian Country as it is used throughout this thesis. O'Brien (1989) provides a working definition: This land, known as Indian Country is governed by both Indian laws and customs and federal laws relating to Indians. Currently, Indians control only 2.3% of their former territory: 50.4 million acres in the continental U.S. (three-fourths of which is tribal owned and one-fourth individually owned) and 40 million acres in Alaska (p. 218).

Indian criminality and their experiences within the American Criminal Justice System. Perhaps the reason for this neglect is the comparatively low reported incidents of involvement in crime and gang activities by American Indians in relation to other ethnic groups. The findings of this research help to fill in this void of information on American Indian gangs and highlight the need for attention and further research for this emerging problem.

Chapter II Literature Review

As indicated previously, there is a glaring absence of academic literature on American Indian gangs. While there is an absence in the academic literature, the popular media has reported on American Indian gang activity emerging on the reservations. Two particular articles from the New York Times (Mydans, 1995) and San Francisco Chronicle (Dial, 1995) report on the Navajo Nation as well as other reservations in the Southwest. Dial indicates that there has been an increase in violence, (e.g., six homicides in the Window Rock area in 1994 were found to be gang-related), turf wars, drive-by shootings, drug trafficking and retaliatory killings. "This violence contradicts the traditions of the Navajo, who long ago were warriors but turned to the peaceful pursuits of shepherding, silversmithing and weaving learned from their Pueblo neighbors. The gang culture now threatens to overshadow the family loyalty prized by traditional Navajo. Young people on the reservation, like those elsewhere, often join gangs out of a need for group identity. Navajo officials view this trend as a tragedy in a tribe with a proud cultural identity of its own. The pressure to straddle two worlds - the Navajo and the American pop culture imported through TV and tourism- leaves teenagers vulnerable" (p. A17). Dial reports that reservations appear to have become the "last frontier" for gang recruitment, opportunity and associated activities.

Mydans reports that Arizona law enforcement authorities estimate that there are about 1,000 gang members on Arizona's 21 reservations. He reports that gang experts in Los Angeles and Phoenix indicate that Indian gangs are in some cases "true branches" of largely African American or Hispanic big-city gangs, often imported by youths who have gone away to school and then returned to the reservations. In other cases, they are remarkably authentic imitations drawn from movies, television and music videos" (Mydans, 1995, p. A1). These same gang experts advise that it should be no surprise that there is a growth of gangs on the reservations as the reservations contain many of the same social ills that breed gangs, i.e., broken families, high rates of joblessness and drug or alcohol abuse resulting in disenfranchised individuals on the reservation.

An additional article on Indian gangs in Oklahoma from the Associated Press (1994), reported that police and social workers who used to encounter Indian youths in gangs were beginning to see gangs that were solely Indian. Sources interviewed indicated that the Oklahoma Indian gangs were different from other larger metropolitan gangs in that their membership was multicultural rather than based on strict racial lines. These gang members were found to be committing their crimes in the cities and then running to tribal lands to hide. Reservation law enforcement officers indicated that gang members from the cities were using the reservations for recruiting new gang members as well as for

selling drugs. Also, the Oklahoma Indian gangs were becoming similar to gangs in the cities through their participation in drive-by shootings, and burglaries as well as developing their own language and style of clothing which they found similar to Hispanic gangs.

Historical Background

In order to understand why American Indian youths are beginning to form and participate in gang activity on the reservations, we need to understand the history of relations between the United States Government and the American Indian in terms of colonialism, assimilation and genocidal policies by the government. Along with this historical perspective, we also need to understand the background of the establishment of Indian reservations as well as the current conditions that their residents must endure. This should lead to an understanding of the connection between these conditions and the emerging presence of Indian gangs on the reservations.

Historically, American Indians have had to suffer through vacillating governmental policies and actions towards them. The first policy implemented was the Indian Removal Act of 1830. This Act was based on the belief that the separation of whites and Indians would limit conflict and open up the West for white settlement. As a result, specific areas of what were once Indian lands (which had reached a peak of 150 million acres in 1873) were designated as reservations. Most reservations were established before 1871 by treaties

between the U.S. and the various tribes as white settlers moved west in search of more land.

Also instrumental in this evolution of governmental control over the Indians was the establishment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1824. While the problems and full extent of the functions of the BIA will not be addressed here, it is important to have a brief explanation of the role of the BIA (since this agency has had both a past and current pervasive presence in the lives of American Indians). At the beginning, the BIA was directed to provide many of the same services to American Indians that were provided to non-Indians from state and local governments. The BIA's mission and policy responsibilities, as defined by Congress and the Executive Branch, have evolved since the 1820's. These policies over time have varied from: (1) the removal of the eastern tribes to the West; (2) Indian confinement to reservations; (3) land allotment and assimilation; (4) termination; and, (5) the current policy of tribal self-determination (Utter, 1993, p. 174).

Indian assimilation was the goal of the Federal Government from 1880 until 1934. Strong pressure was put on Indian tribes to discard their traditional customs and to be assimilated into American society. The General Allotment Act of 1887 (the Dawes Act), which remained the instrument of federal Indian policy for thirty years, permitted the break up of tribal or reservation land into individual allotments. This policy was enacted under the belief that pressuring Indians to

become individual farm operators would accelerate Indian assimilation into the dominant culture. However, many tribes had no background or very little interest in farming. Additionally, the size and location of these allotted lands were inadequate for survival. As a result, numerous allotments were sold to non-Indians at low prices. By 1933, two-thirds of the original Indian land base had passed into non-Indian ownership.

Assimilation efforts were further forced upon American Indians via the boarding school system. Boarding schools became the primary means of socialization in Indian country thus replacing the traditional Indian methods of the clan and extended family. The idea was to remove the Indian from his/her language and culture and to resocialize them through the deliberate condemnation of the traditional ways of the American Indian (French, 1994). Sorkin (1978) tells us that, "This educational model for Indian youth was directed at developing young men and women into joining the mainstream of non-Indian society. Instead, it left a legacy of frustration, depression and alienation that made Indians unable to pursue the traditions of their fathers, and left them unequipped to participate in white dominated society" (p. 3).

A third shift in policy came with the enactment of Wheeler-Howard Act in 1934. This Act was an attempt at strengthening tribal governments and economic policies. Wheeler-Howard continued the trust period on Indian land and those lands that remained unsold after allotment were instead returned to

the tribes. This law also authorized the establishment of a revolving loan fund to provide credit for agricultural and industrial enterprises on the reservations. Included in this period, was the move away from educating Indian children at the off-reservation boarding schools. Children began to receive their education in their home environment (French, 1994; Sorkin, 1978).

The fourth change in policy came in the mid-1950's with the push for the termination of federal responsibility for Indian reservations. Programs for reservation development were temporarily suspended. After the disastrous results of forced termination on two important tribes (the Klamaths and Menominees) became known, federal termination efforts abated and reservation development programs were reinstituted. However, the federal government discovered that the level of reservation resources were inadequate to support the reservation population. The government's response was a large scale "relocation" program where reservation Indians were promised assistance in job training and employment if they moved to the major metropolitan areas where job opportunities tended to be abundant (Sorkin, 1978, p. 5). French (1994) contends that the policy of relocation was another attempt at cultural genocide. He concludes that the actual purpose and plan was to entice young adult Indians off the reservation and into magnet urban areas. This process served to separate subsequent generations from their traditional language, culture, and customs with the expectations that "Indianism" and the "Indian problem" would

die with the elders who remained on the reservations. The result of this policy implementation was a large urban population of marginal Indians; individuals who were Indian in appearance but not in culture. They held membership in neither the larger dominant society nor in their particular traditional culture.

In the early 1960's, a downturn in the national economy resulted in a decrease of jobs in the cities. At the same time, the BIA recognized that one-third of the Indians that had been relocated to the cities were so discouraged by the realities of urban life and the failure of governmental programs to assist them in their transition, that they began returning to the reservations. It became clear that the government's policy of termination and relocation resulted in further impoverishment and land loss for American Indians.

Recognizing the negative effects of termination policies, the federal government once again shifted policy. Self-determination became the final and current official policy of the federal government. The crux of this policy includes the federal government helping tribes to become economically self-sufficient, thus encouraging self-determination. As part of this policy of self-determination is the existing support (albeit tentative as Congress could alter this support at any time) of sovereignty for Indian Nations. During the 1980's, the Supreme Court reaffirmed three sources of sovereignty within the constitutional system: the federal and state governments and American Indian tribal governments. This affirmation of tribal sovereignty gave Indian people the right to control land,

natural resources, economic development, law and order, education and health within reservation boundaries. Indian sovereignty also give tribes the right to decide who may enter and leave it's territory as well as maintain territorial controls with the power to exclude or evict individuals from their jurisdiction. In earlier times, being exiled from the tribe was one of the severest punishments that a tribal government could bring against an individual deemed guilty of violating tribal law. At times, whole groups were, in effect, excluded or exiled from a community. Many tribal constitutions today, (e.g. the Cheyenne River Sioux constitution), specifically authorize the tribal government to exclude "non-members whose presence may be injurious to the members of the tribe, morally or criminally" (O'Brien, 1989, p. 219). As will be discussed further on, this exclusionary power (albeit extreme) may be an alternative for tribes to address problematic gang members and their families on the reservations.

At this time, the American Indian nations, communities, and pueblos, have set out to reverse 150 years of repressive and vacillating federal policies, and seek to reestablish Indian reservations as substantially independent and economically viable communities. This has not been an easy undertaking as tribes have faced many obstacles, including: (1) the dogged resistance of powerful economic and political interests; (2) deep poverty; and, (3) a deep sense of alienation among Indian people, resulting from generations of economic

deprivation and attacks on tribal cultures and traditions.² These events described above have had serious implications on the loss of traditions and cultural practices of American Indian people.

Reservations

This research focuses on gang activity on the American Indian reservations. It would be a serious omission if a description of the harsh realities and life on the American Indian reservations was not discussed. It is the establishment of Indian reservations and their effects on American Indian culture that greatly distinguishes American Indians from other minority groups in this country.

Hirschfelder and de Montaña (1993), Bachman (1992), and Pommersheim (1995), point out that just as there are cultural variations in the dominant society, so are there variations in the American Indian population. The Federal Government recognizes 515 tribes in the United States, including 197 Alaska Native village groups. Today, approximately 35-50 percent of American Indians live on reservations in the U.S., with the remaining number living in urban areas. There are 304 federal Indian reservations in the U.S. The largest of these is the Navajo Nation which includes almost 16 million acres of land in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, but many reservations are less than 1,000 acres with the

² For further sources on the history of governmental policies and the effects on American Indian people, see William T. Hagan (1993), and Frank Pommersheim (1995).

smallest being the Strawberry Valley Rancheria in California which consists of less than one acre. Reservation land may also be owned and occupied by non-Indians.

Reservations were originally places where Indians were segregated from whites and separated from their land. In the nineteenth century, they served as “concentration camps”, where Indians were disarmed and forbidden to leave. Today, reservations are what is left of their homeland, and although only approximately one-third to one-half of American Indians live on the reservations, many native people remain tied to the reservations where they return for special occasions and to renew family ties (Hirschfelder & de Montaña, 1993). According to O’Brien (1989), the reservation holds the key to survival of tribal society. The reservation is the last area in the country where tribes can practice their culture and exercise their right to self-government according to the values of their people. Reservations have become areas of opportunity for strengthening Indian sovereignty, where the Tribal Council has jurisdiction rather than the U.S. government.³

With respect to the present day living conditions on the reservations, Bachman (1992), found much variation: (1) some live according to their traditions; (2) some receive welfare; and, (3) others earn a living as farmers,

³ Except in the area of specific major crimes committed by Indians in Indian Country where the Major Crimes Act of 1885 continues to act as an intrusion into tribal sovereignty in that federal courts maintain jurisdiction.

ranchers, factory workers or as professionals. On one end of the spectrum, there is the traditional Indian who was born on the reservation and speaks the tribal language. At the other end is the American Indian who was born in a city, speaks English, and feels little identification with the tribe. Bachman also points out that variations exist within a single reservation. For example, the Blackfeet, Sioux, and Navajo reservations contain four types of households: (1) the isolated family, located in a remote area of the reservation with a strong preference for use of the native language; (2) the traditional family, generally bilingual and actively participating in tribal ceremonies; (3) the bi-cultural family, living on a reservation and engaging in traditional ceremonies but preferring to speak English; and, (4) the acculturated family, speaking English as the primary language and engaging in family activities that approximate white norms.

Just as there are distinct cultural variations among the American Indian people, there is also wide disparity with respect to income and employment. When addressing poverty in particular, statistical averages show that American Indians in this country suffer the entire range of harmful conditions that are present in most Third World countries. Life expectancy figures are the best evidence of the harshness and deprivation that many American Indians must endure. The average life span of the American Indian is approximately 8-10 years below the national average. Other indicators include: (1) The maternal mortality rate for American Indians is approximately 40 percent higher than the

U.S. average maternal mortality rate; (2) Deaths from alcoholism are almost six times higher, with deaths specifically caused by chronic liver disease and cirrhosis averaging five to six times higher than the U.S. averages; (3) Death rates from homicide and suicide are almost double the national averages and can be as much as eight times higher in some reservation communities; (4) Unemployment averages around 50 percent with some reservations experiencing unemployment rates as high as 80-90 percent; (5) Reservation housing conditions vary considerably with the necessities of running water, central heating, indoor plumbing and electricity not always present. The above are all indicators of the harsh realities that many American Indians live with (Bachman, 1992).

Over three centuries of contact, conflicts between Indians and non-Indians can be attributed to differing philosophies over the meaning of land. "Land is basic to Indian people; they are part of it and it is part of them; it is their Mother" (Pommersheim, 1995, p. 13). The land is important to American Indians for not only does it provide sustenance for life but is also the "source of spiritual origins and sustaining myth, which in turn provides a landscape of cultural and emotional meaning" (p. 14). As a result of past conflict, forced assimilation and changed land patterns, there has been a major severing of this "cultural tap root" connecting Indian people to their land. Pommersheim (1995) contends that this break in the relationship of the people to the land has had deleterious social

effects as evidenced by pervasive problems of teenage alcoholism and juvenile crime on the reservation. To illustrate this point, he cites the former Chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe (New Mexico): "Our children are losing the land. It doesn't work on them anymore. They don't know the story about what happened to these places. That's why some get into trouble" (p. 34).

Pommersheim however sees positive changes in the situation as indicated by the renewal of efforts at reconnecting with the Earth primarily by reservation communities. They are attempting this renewal through education as well as the restoration and revitalization of the land.

Theoretical Explanations

So far, a brief history of the of relations between the United States government and the American Indian and conditions on the reservation have been discussed thus providing a background of the American Indian experience in white America. This section includes a discussion of the proposed theories for Indian involvement in criminal activities from which inferences can be made for the motivations for American Indian gang formation and the subsequent participation in criminal activity on the reservations.

Culture Conflict

Flowers (1988) contends that a clash in cultures is the main reason for the extent and patterns of American Indian criminality. He posits that it is because

of: (1) the unique position of American Indians as the original Americans; (2) they have had to exist under two distinct cultures; and, (3) have been unable or unwilling to adjust successfully on all levels. One primary area in which the conflict in cultures is readily apparent is in the criminal law. American Indians, particularly those living on reservations are subject to several different sets of laws and brands of punishment depending upon which jurisdiction the offense(s) occurred. The differences between tribal law and federal and state codes can be considerable. An example of these differences would include: where tribal punishment for a particular crime may be only a few months in jail, the same crime, in a state court, may result in a few years in prison.

Bachman (1992), found that culture conflict was experienced by the majority of the offenders she interviewed in prison. Many of her respondents told her of being forced to attend Catholic schools and churches and being denied the opportunity of practicing their traditional religion. Grandparents and parents were oftentimes beaten if they spoke their native language as a means used by the church and school to assimilate them into the dominant society. Others told of being one of a few Indians in white dominated schools where no matter how hard they tried to fit in, they were never successful. Some would get into fights and join gangs with other Indian males as a means of survival and gaining an identity. Many expressed that they felt at a loss because their traditional identity had been taken away from them, yet, neither did they fit in with the dominant society.

Bachman contends that the negative consequences of culture conflict makes psychological adjustment more difficult particularly when an American Indian is struggling with the usual identity problems of youth compounded by identity problems of being an Indian in a white society - an identity that is too often confronted with negative stereotypes and discrimination in our society. This situation is further compounded by an environment dominated by such factors as high unemployment, poverty, and social disorganization. The effects of these factors sometimes manifest themselves in acts of crime and lethal violence.

Economic Deprivation

American Indians as a group are more disadvantaged economically than any other American minority group. American Indians generally have significantly lower incomes, higher unemployment, education, poverty and other socioeconomic difficulties than the U.S. population as a whole. However, Flowers (1988) points out that this explanation alone is not sufficient in explaining American Indian crime but rather a contributory factor to their crime rate. Bachman (1992) contends that economic deprivation creates feelings of hopelessness, apathy, and anger resulting in such pathological behaviors as alcoholism, suicide, child abuse and lethal violence. One form of coping with the alienation and hostility that poverty may produce is through aggression.

The earliest theoretical work that links the economic structure of society with deviance comes from Merton (1938). In his theory of anomie, Merton defines anomie as a “socially structured contradiction between the normative goals or aspirations of individuals in our society and the means available for legitimately attaining these goals. This contradiction between goals and means has a direct relationship to deviant behavior” (as cited in Bachman, 1992, p. 48). He believes that the probability of deviance increases when the “anybody can do it” aspirations of American society are confronted with the “not everybody has an equal chance” opportunity structure. Deviance was seen as a normal by-product of an unequal society.

Bachman (1992) found that these feelings of hopelessness and humiliation often associated with lack of economic opportunities and being poor were prevalent among the Indian homicide inmates she interviewed. Her respondents had two criminal responses to blocked economic opportunities: (1) participation in property crimes as a means of obtaining needed or perceived needed goods or, (2) feelings of frustration were dealt with through resorting to violence, particularly towards others and family members.

Internal Colonial Model

The Internal Colonial model suggests that a dominant group comes to control a subordinate group through the ability to destroy the culture and social organization of the subordinate group, as well as, obtain control of their economic

resources. The dominant group further enhances its power over the subordinate group by creating, and then playing upon, stereotypes of the subordinate group which depicts them as possessing characteristics which are despised by the dominant group (Green, 1993). The European conquest of the American Indian populations typifies this process of internal colonialism. Since the first European contact, American Indians have been relegated to a colonized status where they were brutalized, exploited, segregated, expelled from their original lands and for some tribes, annihilation. Additionally, the introduction of European technology introduced changes in the economies of most native groups. Due to the popularity of fur in European fashion at that time, Europeans encouraged the development of a continent-wide fur trade that drew many Native groups away from their traditional economies (horticulture, hunting, and fishing and so on). The European hunting of the buffalo changed the ecology of whole regions of the continent leading to depleted native resources and dependence on European foods (Bachman, 1992).

Because the Europeans deemed themselves superior (due to beliefs in Social Darwinism and paternalism), they believed they had the right to impose their culture, economy, laws and religion on "inferior peoples" (i.e. the Indians). Means used to force the Native peoples to adopt European culture included: (1) the passing of laws forbidding the practice of Native beliefs and ceremonies; (2) children being removed from their families and communities, placed in European-

run boarding schools, and prohibited from speaking their native language, eating familiar foods or practicing their own spirituality (Nielsen, 1996). The removal of tribes to reservations also drastically altered economies as tribes were generally placed on land insufficient for traditional economic opportunities and/or too poor to farm. This combination of factors led to increased economic dependence on the federal government.

Social Disorganization

The foundation for the social disorganization perspective stems from Durkheim's argument that rapid social change is associated with increases in crime due to a breakdown of social controls. The supporters of this theory suggest that when a society is in a state of social disorganization, people are set free from normative constraints, leading increasing numbers of people to drift from conformity into deviance (Bachman, 1992). Bachman, again, in her study of incarcerated American Indian murderers, found shared life histories which contained indicators of social disorganization. The biggest indicator was the disruption of family life whether it was: (1) separation from their parents through being sent to foster homes; (2) being sent to boarding schools at a young age; and/or (3) adopted by non-Indian parents. The family is usually the center of an individual's emotional life and assaults on Indian families through separation have led to pervasive feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness. She found that in addition to experiencing the trauma of separation from their families, the

men interviewed also had to cope with the problems of adjusting to a social and cultural environment much different from their own. Bachman concluded that this disruption to the family contributed to an environment of social disorganization in the lives of the homicide offenders interviewed.

Alcohol Abuse

Perhaps the one prevailing condition that contributes to American Indian criminality and adversely affects many aspects of Indian life is the abuse of alcohol. While there is a preponderance of evidence to indicate that alcohol has pervaded the lives of American Indians, some researchers caution against making generalizations about Indians and alcohol use. Ferguson (1968) advises that the situation is far more complex than the attribution of simple causes or typologies.

From a historical perspective, the introduction of alcohol to the Indians, next to disease, was perhaps the most dangerous element of contact between the Europeans and Indian (Ballantine & Ballantine, 1993). While many tribes were known for their abstinence (e.g. the Pawnees, and Crows), alcohol, as a staple of trade between the European traders and Indians, generated an Indian want and demand where none had existed before.

Gallaher, Fleming, Berger, and Sewell (1992), remind us that not all Indians drink and not all who drink do so excessively. The generalizing of drinking patterns reinforces negative stereotypes and can have an unintended

impact of promoting excessive drinking among Indians (this is a conclusion garnered from their studies of towns which border Indian reservations). They contend that the negative stereotypes of American Indians that have been perpetuated through the centuries in the literature and the media, have allowed other people to maintain a distorted and negative view of Indian tribes. What is even more detrimental is that many Indians accept these negative stereotypes themselves.

Bachman (again in her study of American Indians incarcerated for homicide) found the majority of respondents had alcoholic parents. The family unit for these inmates was not characterized by a secure routine but was disrupted by frequent and sporadic drinking binges on the part of one or both parents. While recognizing that not all children of alcoholic parents suffer the negative effects of parental alcohol abuse, the offenders interviewed appeared to have more difficulty in avoiding the negative behavioral and psychological consequences from such a familial environment.

The one hypothesis that researchers can agree upon is that the Indian's particular and long history has had the effect of: (1) establishing an appreciation for alcohol; (2) a need for it to cope with the life and times they have been forced into; and (3) have had a shorter time to have developed self-control and cultural responses to the implications of alcohol use and abuse. This has led to their

greater involvement in alcohol consumption and alcohol-related crimes more than other groups (Flowers, 1988).

Because there is virtually no prior research on American Indian gangs (at least in the academic literature), the next section will include a brief review of the literature on existing gangs with the goal that this review will provide a basis from which to draw inferences to American Indian gangs as well as discover the similarities and differences between Indian and non-Indian gangs.

Gangs

To understand the nature of American Indian gangs, we need to first understand youth gangs in general; that is, what constitutes a youth gang, what are their characteristics, the types of activities they are involved in and why youths join gangs.

Definition of a Gang

Many definitions of a youth gang have been offered (see Spergel, 1989; Goldstein, 1991; Klein, 1995; California Penal Code, 1996). For the purposes of this research, a youth gang is defined as: "Any denotable group (of adolescents and young adults) who are: (1) generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in their neighborhood; (2) recognize themselves as a denotable group with a common identifying name; and, (3) have been involved in a sufficient number of (illegal) incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from

neighborhood residents and/or law enforcement agencies” (Klein & Maxson, 1989, p. 205).

Gang Characteristics

Youth gang membership cuts across all racial and ethnic lines.⁴

Additionally there is a blending of ethnic groups within gang sets (Family and Youth Services Bureau, 1996). Youth gangs today are found in almost all fifty states, including Hawaii and Alaska, with the possible exceptions of a few in the northeastern and north central mountain states. Gender composition of gangs continues with males outnumbering female gang members at a ratio of approximately 20 to 1 with the males committing a majority of the gang-related crimes (Spergel & Curry, 1990, p. 171).

The age range of gang membership has expanded to encompass ages 9 to 30 years. Gangs often use younger members as runners, lookouts, etc., with the knowledge that if they are caught, they are more likely to receive lenient treatment from the juvenile justice system. Older members tend to remain in the gang due to both the profits built in to drug dealing along with the lack of employment opportunities for disadvantaged minority populations (Goldstein, 1991). Hagedorn (1990) found that each age group develops its own sub-groups: leaders, main group and “wanna-be’s”. The makeup of each of these

⁴ Per material presented at the Gangs on Indian Country Training Seminars, this ethnic breakdown includes: Hispanic gangs: 52%; African-American gangs: 38%; White gangs: 7%; American Indian gangs 2-3%; and Asian gangs: 1%.

age groups varies over time between each gang. For example, a “wanna-be” this week, may be in the main group the next week.

Popular mythology holds that most gangs in smaller cities are branches intentionally exported to these locations by particular big-city gangs or “megagangs” (with particular reference to the Los Angeles based Crips and Bloods). Goldstein (1991) advises that while a modest amount of such “franchising”, “branching”, or “hiving off” may occur, most gangs in mid-size or smaller cities either originate locally or are started by non-resident gang members via kinship, alliance, expansion of turf boundaries or movement of gang families into new areas.

Gangs can be broken down into two types: cultural and entrepreneurial. Cultural gangs are traditional neighborhood gangs whose identity is strongly grounded in a neighborhood and may extend through generations. The entrepreneurial gang is organized for economic gain activities (primarily drugs); they do not have any sense of neighborhood loyalty like cultural gangs; they are regarded by their members as an “organization” and are considered a strict “business” operation which engages primarily in criminal activities. While these gangs are less neighborhood-centered and more focused towards business, they do their recruitment usually within a particular neighborhood or housing project (Skolnick, Correl, Navarro & Rabb, 1990).

Female Gangs.

Female gang members have three types of relationships with male gangs: (1) as independently functioning units; (2) as regular members in “coed” gangs; and (3) female auxiliaries of the male groups. Females as auxiliaries to the male gang is the most common reason for the existence of female gangs. They usually come into existence after the male gang has been established and often take the feminized version of the male’s gang name (Campbell, 1990). Females from the neighborhood (and beyond) are not pressured or coerced into joining. Usually potential members come through friendship networks and family ties. Where a formal initiation ceremony exists, it usually takes the form of a prearranged fist fight between the prospective member and an established member. The function of this “jumping in” is to prove publicly the new member’s ability to fight. She doesn’t have to win, just demonstrate her “heart” or courage. Weapons of choice for females tend to be knives or fist fights.

Female gang members seem to have the same basic need for status as the males, although the criteria for its achievement are defined somewhat differently. Female gangs have a higher turnover, a shorter life span, less effective organization and leadership. The active gang female, like her male counterpart, is part of a highly turbulent and violent social world. However, violence patterns seem to be different in that females achieve status and

excitement through provocation of fights between members of rival gangs.

Females also carry messages, spy on rival gangs and carry concealed weapons for the males (Spergel, 1989).

Gang Activities.

Hagedorn (1990) found that crime occupies only a small portion of the daily existence of a gang. As gangs expand, they interact with other gangs usually resulting in constant fighting which helps to shape the structure of the gang. While this fighting occurs, most gang members just “hang out” engaging in the typical interpersonal activities of most adolescents. However, they do commit delinquent acts and engage in various forms and levels of aggression (up to and including homicide) (Goldstein, 1991).

Gang graffiti becomes a means for claiming turf or territory and is a visible manifestation of a gang’s control of social space. The extent and intensity of “ownership” of a territory is revealed by the extensiveness and type of graffiti. Additionally, graffiti is used to challenge or show contempt for a rival gang (Goldstein, 1991).

Gang Violence.

Inter-gang violence is likely to grow out of perceptions that one gang has been challenged, insulted, offended, or injured by another gang. It is “nothing personal” and analogous to soldiers in a war where the opposing armies need not know each other (Cohen, 1990). Violence is a central aspect of both types of

gangs (cultural and entrepreneurial), however, the violence is used for differing purposes based on the gang type. Cultural gangs traditionally focus on retribution, the assertion of neighborhood gang identity, and turf protection. Entrepreneurial gangs employ violence to control or expand their drug business and markets and to protect its authority. The purpose in turn affects the frequency of the incidents of violence, the resources the gangs are likely to have at their disposal for engaging in violent activity and ultimately, the degree to which gang violence is susceptible to control by law enforcement efforts (Skolnick, et al., 1990).

When addressing the issue of increased gang violence, Spergel and Curry (1990) attribute the following factors to this increase: (1) gangs have more availability to weapons (guns); (2) guns are now used often conjointly with a vehicle; and, (3) the “tradition” of inter-gang rumbles based on large gathering of youths arriving for “battle” on foot, have been substituted by smaller mobile groups of youths, usually in a vehicle, out looking for opposing gang members. While shootings are sometimes planned in advance (for retribution purposes), spur of the moment decisions to attack targets of sudden opportunity are more common. Klein and Maxson (1989) suggest that increased gang violence may not reflect an actual greater level of violence among and between gangs but rather the result of a growth in the actual numbers of gangs and/or gang

members, an increasingly violent society, more sophisticated gang intelligence and increased law enforcement attention and efforts.

Why Juveniles Join Gangs.

Juveniles join a gang for a multitude of reasons. Some of these reasons include: (1) Identity - many youths join a gang because they want to be known as a member of the gang and reap the benefits that this membership brings them, namely the kind of identity that they want to display. This identity is valuable because it suggests power, fearlessness, and domination. To keep inspiring fear, awe and deference, these gang members must be prepared to engage in acts of violence, sometimes as a group, against rival gangs; (2) Family - gang membership can provide the relational reward and security that can be associated with being part of a family as many of these youths come from dysfunctional and abusive (i.e. physical, sexual and substance abusing) families. When young people are victims of physical or sexual abuse, anger is stored up, builds over time and the gang then becomes a means for this anger to be released; (3) Financial Reward - Some gangs facilitate financially rewarding criminal activity for its members. The monetary allure of gang membership is difficult to counteract. Gang members share profits from drug trafficking and other illegal moneymaking activities; (4) Self-protection - many join a gang out of self-protection as established gang members threaten to keep beating up the non-gang member unless or until, he joins the gang; (5) Lack of Opportunities - a

lack of job opportunities, positive recreational choices, or lack of effective responses to peer pressure, can create a climate favoring gang membership. In many communities, the adolescent social environment entices youths into joining gangs. Youth gangs breed in communities where social and economic conditions and meager job opportunities offer a bleak future to its young people. After school and recreational activities are few, contributing to young people turning to gangs for excitement, structure, and a sense of belonging.⁵

The media articles found were presented as an introduction to what (minimal) information was available on American Indian gangs. This information served as a valuable starting point for investigating American Indian gangs. To build on this information, it became necessary to examine the literature that exists on American Indians as a means of providing a background from which to draw inferences for the formation of American Indian youth gangs. A historical perspective was presented for the purpose of relaying the treatment that American Indians have received at the hands of the United States government and the consequences of that treatment. A secondary focus included information on the formation of reservations and the current conditions. These conditions have been deemed similar to those of inner cities which historically have been spawning grounds for gang formation by minority youths. It was necessary to also examine the theories that address American Indian crime in general. These

⁵ For further reading on reasons young people join gangs, refer to: Cohen (1990); Goldstein (1991); Huff (1996); Klein & Maxson (1989); Knox (1993); Mays (1997); and Spergel (1995).

theories provide additional information which helps build an understanding for their criminal behaviors. The discussion of the current youth gang research was presented to provide a basis for an understanding of the emerging presence of Indian gangs as well as for establishing a basis for comparison between American Indian and non-Indian youth gangs.

Research Areas

Extent of Gangs

What is the extent of American Indian gangs? What reservations experience a gang presence or absence and what is the number of gangs reported by the respondents in the study?

Additionally, particular variables were chosen for examination as a means of ascertaining whether certain conditions on the reservations are influential in the presence or absence of gangs. Reservation size (based on square miles and population) was first examined with the expectation that the larger the reservation, the more likely there was to be gangs. The second variable examined was the economic condition of the reservation with the expectation that the higher the poverty level on the reservation, the more likely there is to be a presence of gangs. Next was the variable of distance from the nearest urban center with the assumption that the closer a reservation is to an urban area, the more likely there would be gangs. This too is based on an assumption that the closer the Indian youths are to urban gangs, the more likely they are to promote

a gang presence on the reservation. The presence of federally funded housing was examined with the assumption that with “cluster style” housing (which is contrary to traditional Indian housing on the reservations) the more likely there is to be a presence of gangs. Lastly, was an examination of whether the nearest off-reservation schools that Indian youths attend are experiencing gangs and if so, is this factor having an influence on gang presence on the reservation? The assumption is that if there is a gang presence at the off reservation schools that the reservation youth attend, then there is more likely to be a gang presence on the reservation.⁶

Additionally, under investigation were the officer’s perceptions as to the reasons for gang formation on their reservations. Also, realizing that there are reservations without gangs, those respondents were asked what they felt were the factors that might account for this absence.

Gang Characteristics

What are Indian gang characteristics? To ascertain these characteristics it was important to ascertain: when was a gang presence first noted, what is the membership size and age, what is their nomenclature, what is the gender composition and participation, how do they dress, what types of activities are they involved in and what are the reasons why they are joining gangs. A

⁶ Because there is no prior research on American Indian gangs, these variables described were chosen by this researcher as a starting place towards trying to explore why it is that some reservations have gangs while others do not.

secondary question then becomes in what ways are they similar to non-Indian gangs.

Law Enforcement Response

The third area of research is how do reservation law enforcement agencies respond to the presence of gangs on their respective reservations? While we know much from the literature on non-Indian law enforcements' response to gangs, we know virtually nothing about how Indian law enforcement is responding to this emerging phenomenon in Indian Country.

The methods used for ascertaining this information are described in the next chapter.

Chapter III Research Method

This research consists of an exploratory study of the extent of gangs in Indian Country, Indian gang characteristics, and law enforcement's response to them. The research was limited to Indian gangs on the reservations as it was assumed that more information could be readily gathered from a confined geographical area and reservations contain many of the same socioeconomic conditions that entice youths of other ethnic groups into joining gangs.

For the purposes of this research project, the initial information sources included the media – specifically articles in the San Francisco Chronicle and New York Times which both reported evidence of gangs appearing on the Indian reservations (Dial, 1995; Mydans, 1995). These articles used the presence of gang activities on the Navajo Nation and reservations in the Southwest as evidence that gangs were spreading to Indian reservations. Secondly, the Internet was used to: (a) provide an avenue for reaching Navajo Nation personnel for contact for initial interviews; (b) to ascertain addresses of the Tribal and BIA police departments across the country (which proved to be somewhat successful as a few addresses were obtained); and, (c) provide an avenue for attempting to contact Tribal, BIA and any other law enforcement officers who work with Indian gangs. A third source included in-person, informal interviews

with police officers from the Navajo Nation Law Enforcement Division. These interviews came about after contacting the Public Information Office for the Navajo Nation whose personnel made a referral to a Sergeant in the Department of Law Enforcement, Window Rock District, of the Navajo Nation. After sending an introductory letter and an introductory phone call, the interview was arranged to take place on October 17, 1995, at the Department of Law Enforcement Division office in Window Rock, Arizona. During the time that the Sergeant was displaying confiscated gang paraphernalia (including clothing with gang insignia, school binders with gang symbols, gang art work, as well as pictures of identified gang members, and so on), we were joined by the Captain of the District, as well as three other officers who were on duty (one of whom was the former gang officer), all of whom contributed first hand experiences with the gang members in their jurisdiction.

The purpose of these interviews was to explore what was happening on the Navajo Nation and utilize this information as a basis for the pilot study of reservations nationwide. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions with the officers describing the types of activities the identified gang members were involved, the number of gangs and membership size, their clothing styles, etc. Possible reasons for the formation of gangs were also addressed. The time spent with the Navajo officers greatly helped to establish a starting point for a pilot study and development of the final survey instrument.

Pilot Study

The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions which were based on the interviews with the Navajo Tribal police as well as on prior knowledge of gangs as a means of ascertaining the extent of gang activity on the reservations as well as basic gang characteristics. The sample for the pilot study consisted of Law Enforcement officers who maintain jurisdiction over crimes committed by American Indians on the reservations. The reason for surveying these officers relied on the assumption that they are the “front line” and “first responders” to reports of gang activity. It was also assumed that these officers could provide a realistic portrayal of gangs in Indian Country. General areas covered included: (1) demographics of the reservation population; (2) demographics of the law enforcement agency (i.e. size, training, funding, presence of gang officers, etc.); (3) presence of gangs on the reservation; (4) gang characteristics; (5) strategies used by the tribal and/or BIA police in addressing gang activities; (6) if there was an absence of gangs on the reservation, what were possible reasons for this absence; and, (7) any other information the police officers wished to relay pertinent to this study (see Appendix A).

Locating addresses for the Tribal and BIA Law Enforcement Agencies proved to be a difficult undertaking as there is no central directory of all the reservation law enforcement agencies across the country. However, 116 addresses were obtained from the National Directory of Law Enforcement

Administrators, Correctional Institutions and Related Agencies (a Publication of the National Police Chiefs and Sheriff's Information Bureau) which contained a section on Tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs Law Enforcement. Not knowing what kind of response would be obtained, the questionnaire, along with a letter of introduction and explanation of the research project, were mailed to all of these addresses. The respondents were advised that their participation was strictly voluntary and that their responses would remain anonymous. Also included was a stamped addressed return envelope (which was utilized in the hopes of stimulating a greater return rate). The surveys were mailed out during the month of November, 1995, with a follow-up letter sent during January, 1996. Of the 116 surveys mailed, 58 percent (67) were returned.

The most important finding from this preliminary survey was of those 67 respondents, 51% (34) indicated a gang presence on their reservations. This specific finding highlighted the need for further exploration of Indian gangs. The responses to the survey also pointed out which questions were unclear to them as well as highlighted those areas which necessitated expansion as well as elimination. The returns from this questionnaire were compiled for refinement of the final survey instrument.

During the interim (between receiving the initial survey results and preparing the final survey instrument), additional information was obtained from attendance at two "Gangs on Indian Country" training seminars (January 23-25,

1996 in Las Vegas, Nevada and July 31-August 1, 1996 in Phoenix, Arizona - These Seminars were conducted by Resource Training Associates of Tucson, Arizona). What was learned from these seminars was that gangs were indeed problematic on many of the reservations in the Southwest to the extent that the larger law enforcement agencies (e.g. Salt River Pima and Navajo) were forming their own gang units in order to deal with this emerging problem. What appeared to concern the officers presenting the material was the growth in violence employed by gang members on the reservations. The primary focus of these seminars seemed to be not only the conveyance of information on Indian gangs but a means of forewarning other reservation officers (who may not yet be experiencing a high level of gang activity), that if their community and law enforcement do not come together to address this issue, the gang situation will only worsen.

While much of the information presented pertained to the reservations in the Southwest, the seminars helped to bring into focus those areas of exploration for reservations nationwide. The information obtained from this training also aided in further refinement of the survey instrument.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument for this thesis research included the same general areas of questioning as the pilot survey, however the format of the questions

were simplified (to include a preponderance of yes and no responses) and additional areas of inquiry were included. These were: (1) the economic conditions of the reservations; (2) presence and effects of casinos; (3) utilization of cross deputization and mutual aid agreements with other non-Indian law enforcement agencies; (4) presence of federally funded housing; (5) distance from the nearest urban area; and, (6) additional gang characteristics, to include questions on: the presence of female gangs, specific types of crimes they participate in, perceived increases or decreases in gang violence, and involvement in substance abuse (see Appendix B).

In the interim between the mailing of the first and second surveys, more addresses were obtained⁷ thus bringing the total addresses available to 181 Tribal and BIA Law enforcement agencies. Hoping for a more complete picture of Indian gangs across the country, the second survey was sent to all 181 agencies. This survey was sent during September, 1996 with a follow up letter sent January, 1997. Of the 181 surveys sent, 43 percent (77) were returned.⁸ While a larger response rate was hoped for, the surveys that were returned were

⁷ A more complete address listing was discovered in the "1996-97 Indian Country Address Book" Published by the American Indian Communication & Information Company. While this listing seemed rather complete, it is still unknown if this directory listed every reservation law enforcement agency in existence.

⁸ It was disappointing that many of the same agencies who responded to the preliminary survey did not respond to the second one. It can be speculated that the reasons for the decrease was possibly due to: 1) time of year the survey was sent (holidays and severe winter in some parts of the country); 2) cut backs in funding; 3) politics and high turnover rate for Police Chiefs, Captains, as well as movement of line officers to different districts and or departments; and, 4) perhaps many of the agencies who participated in the pilot study felt the second survey was a duplication of the pilot (although an introductory letter was sent addressing this issue) and was discarded.

deemed to be representative of the reservations across the country as indicated by the diversity of states, variations in size and populations of reservations, etc.

Table 1 represents the number of surveys sent and received for both the pilot and second survey as well as the number of agencies who responded to both surveys:

Table 1 Responses by States

STATE	Pilot Survey #Sent	Pilot Survey # Received	2 nd Survey # Sent	2 nd Survey # Received	# of Agencies Responding to both Surveys
Alabama	--	--	1	1	--
Alaska	1	1	1	1	--
Arizona	13	10	15	1	1
California	3	2	5	2	1
Colorado	2	1	2	--	--
Connecticut	2	--	1	--	--
Florida	2	2	2	1	1
Idaho	1	1	3	2	--
Iowa	1	1	1	1	1
Kansas	--	--	1	--	--
Louisiana	3	1	3	1	1
Maine	3	1	3	3	1
Michigan	5	4	8	4	3
Minnesota	2	2	5	3	2
Mississippi	1	--	1	--	--
Montana	7	6	7	5	4
Nebraska	2	1	2	--	--
Nevada	7	5	13	8	3
New Mexico	14	9	18	8	3
New York	3	3	3	2	2
N. Carolina	1	1	1	1	--
N. Dakota	1	--	4	1	--
Oklahoma	12	5	22	5	2
Oregon	3	1	4	2	--
Rhode Island	1	--	1	--	--
S. Dakota	8	1	13	2	--
Texas	--	--	1	--	--
Utah	1	--	3	--	--
Virginia	1	--	--	--	--
Washington	10	4	23	16	2
Wisconsin	5	4	6	1	1
Wyoming	1	1	1	--	--
Navajo	--	--	7	6	1*
TOTALS	116	67	181	77	29

Referring to the Navajo responses in Table 1 above, only one survey was sent to the Navajo Nation Division of Law Enforcement (Window Rock District) for the Pilot study, which is included in the Arizona total. For the final study, the decision was made to send surveys to each of the seven police districts (as a means of ascertaining an overall picture of the gang activity in the Navajo Nation).

Limitations

Limitations to the research included: (1) the research was preliminary and exploratory in nature due to the dearth of prior academic research in this area; (2) the responses were based on the perceptions of the police officers about what was occurring on their respective reservations; (3) identified Indian gang members were not surveyed, as again, the starting point for this study began with the police officers providing their perceptions/information about what was occurring on the reservations; (4) there were no arrest statistics obtained from the responding agencies nor were any statistics gathered due to the varying agencies that police the reservations (which includes either: the FBI, Bureau of Indian Affairs, State, County and/or Tribal Police) hence there is no central repository for reservation crime statistics; and, (5) for the majority of the final survey questions, the officers were asked to select one choice, however, the respondents consistently chose more than one response (while this had the

potential for skewing the results, this was taken into consideration when interpreting/calculating the responses).

The Findings that will be discussed in the ensuing chapter will pertain to the analysis of the results from the final survey.

The following are tribes represented in this survey sample:

<u>Alaska</u> Metlakatla	<u>Arizona</u> Navajo Hopi Sioux Pueblo	<u>California</u> Hoopa Yurok Cahuilla Karok	<u>Florida</u> Miccosukee	<u>Idaho</u> Coeur D'Alene Flathead Spokane Shoshone Bannock	<u>Iowa</u> Meskwaki
<u>Louisiana</u> Chitimacha	<u>Maine</u> Passamaquoddy Micmac Penobscot	<u>Michigan</u> Potawatomi Chippewa Lac Vieux Desert	<u>Minnesota</u> Chippewa Ojibwe	<u>Montana</u> Crow Gros Ventres Assiniboine Chippewa Cree Northern Cheyenne Sioux	<u>N. Carolina</u> Cherokee
<u>N. Dakota</u> Chippewa	<u>New York</u> Oneida Mohawk Onondaga	<u>New Mexico</u> Isleta Tesque Santa Clara Picuris Pojoque San Ildefonso Nambe Sioux Taos	Apache Tewa Tamaya Acoma Laguna Zuni Hopi Ute Navajo	<u>Nevada</u> Paiute Washoe Sioux Cherokee Cheyenne Ponca So. Paiute Western Shoshone	<u>Oklahoma</u> Pawnee Choctaw Osage Cheyenne Arapaho Chickasaw Choctaw Creek Seminole
<u>Oregon</u> Paiute	<u>S. Dakota</u> Crow Sioux	<u>Washington</u> Quileute Hoh Puyallup Nez Perce Sioux Saulk Nooksack Skokomish Kootenai Coeur D'Alene	Chehalis Quinault Tlinget Yakama Lummi Flathead Blackfeet Muckleshoot Chehalis	Cowlitz Chinook Colville Cherokee Skagit Ojibwe Warm Springs Umatilla Suquamish	<u>Wisconsin</u> Mohicans

Reservation Demographics

The size of the reservations ranged from a low of 1 sq. mile to a high of 25,000 sq. miles with a median size of 89 sq. miles. Populations of responding

reservations ranged from a low of 60 (both adults and juveniles) to a high of 280,000 with an average population of 15,586.

Reservation Crime in General

Prior to discussing the findings on Indian gangs, it was necessary to ascertain what the most pressing law enforcement problem was on the reservation and briefly discover what was occurring with reservation juvenile crime in general. As can be seen by Table 2, alcohol use was deemed the most pressing problem as indicated by 75% of the respondents.

Table 2 Most Pressing Law Enforcement Problem on the Reservation

CRIME	FREQ.	%	N=77
Alcohol Use	57	74	
Domestic Violence	15	19	
Drugs	13	17	
Non-Violent juvenile crime	11	14	
Child abuse	7	9	
Violent juvenile crime	5	6	
All Categories	5	6	
Non-violent adult crime	4	5	
Violent adult crime	3	3	

Note: Respondents chose more than one answer accounting for a total more than 100%.

With respect to substance abuse by reservation youth, 84% (63) of the respondents indicated that alcohol use by juveniles was deemed problematic while drug use was followed at 71% (51) and use of inhalants by 30% (21). With respect to crimes in general by juveniles, 65% (49) of the respondents had observed an increase, while 27% (20) had noticed no change and less than 1%

As Figure 2 indicates, there was a gang presence in 16 states. It was assumed that one of the explanations for this was that there are higher populations of Indians and reservations in the particular states represented, however, it was found that not all the states reporting gang presence have them on every reservation in that particular state.

The number of gangs per reservation ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 113 with a mean of 4 gangs per reservation.

Factors Related to Gang Formation on the Reservation

As a means of ascertaining whether there are particular factors that influence gang formation and gang presence on the reservation the variables of: (1) reservation size, (2) economic conditions, (3) distance from the nearest urban center, (4) the presence of federally funded housing and (5) presence of gangs on the nearest off reservation school, were compared between gang and non-gang reservations.

(1) Reservation size - The median size of respondent reservations with gangs was 1,025 sq. miles and reservations without gangs had a median size of 1,051. Average population figures for reservations reporting gangs was 23,892 while the average population figure for reservations reporting an absence of gangs was 1,968. As proposed in the Research Areas section, the assumption was that the larger the reservation, the more likely there was to be a gang presence. The above figures point out that while the land size of gang and non-

gang reservations appear to be about equal, the population figures show reservations reporting gang presence have the larger population figure.

(2) For the purposes of this study, poverty levels were compared as this may have an influence on the presence of gangs. The assumption is that the higher the poverty level on a reservation, the more likely there is to be a presence of gangs. The majority of agencies (81%) without gangs rate their economic conditions as "good to fair" with 18% rating their economic conditions as "poor to really awful". In comparison, reservations with gangs have a majority (56%) reporting "good to fair conditions" with a higher percentage (34%) reporting "poor to really awful" conditions. It appears from the respondents that reservations without gangs enjoy somewhat better economic conditions by almost one-half.

(3) Another expectation was that the closer the reservation is to an urban center, the more likely there will be the presence of gangs on that reservation. As Table 3 indicates, for reservations without gangs, 13% (13) of the reservations are located less than 15 miles from the nearest urban center while 11% (12) are located more than 15 miles away. For reservations with gangs, 23% (22) of the reservations are less than 15 miles from the nearest urban center while 21% (21) are located more than 15 miles away. These results do not appear to support the above expectation as reservations with and without

gangs have about the same number of reservations less than 15 miles away as they do more than 15 miles away.

Table 3 Distance from Nearest Urban Center N = 74

Distance	<1 mi	1-5 mi	6-10 mi	11-15 mi	>15 mi	Row Total	%
Gangs							
Yes	5	12	2	3	21	48	65
No	2	3	5	3	12	26	35
Totals	7	15	7	6	33	74	100

4) The variable of presence of federally funded housing (Housing Urban and Development [HUD] programs) or “cluster housing” was also compared for reservations with and without gangs. Ninety-six percent (46) of the reservations with gangs have such housing clusters as do 96% (25) of the reservations without gangs. To ascertain if these housing areas are experiencing gang activities, the respondents were asked to indicate their greatest crime problem in these housing areas. As Table 4 indicates, alcohol related crimes pose the greatest law enforcement problem. Alcohol, in combination with another crime, push the totals even higher. It was interesting to note that none of the respondents indicated gangs were their highest crime problem in the housing areas, however, 20% (13) indicated gangs were problematic in combination with other crimes (as indicated below).

Table 4 Highest Crime Problems N = 64

CRIME	FREQUENCY	%
Alcohol	26	41
Alcohol/Domestic Violence	13	20
All Categories (A/D/DV/G)	13	20
Drugs	3	5
Domestic Violence	2	3
Alcohol/Gangs	1	1
Drugs/Gangs/Domestic Viol.	1	1
Gangs	--	--

Note: 13 respondents did not answer this question, also, respondents chose more than one answer accounting for a compilation of their responses.

*Indicated as lesser crime problems were: Burglaries (4), child abuse (3), assaults (3), thefts (3), curfew violations (2), and vandalism (1).

Eighty-nine percent (58) of the officers indicated that these housing areas pose law enforcement problems for their agencies, however 68% (44) of them indicated that these problems were being addressed through crime prevention programs involving the housing community and the law enforcement agency.

These initial findings would indicate that while cluster housing poses particular crime problems on the reservation, it does not appear, from the responses, that gang activity is a predominant problem.

5) Lastly, the presence of gangs on the nearest off-reservation schools was also compared since this variable was deemed likely to encourage the formation of juvenile gangs on the reservation. Seventy-one percent (34) of the respondents with gangs indicated that the nearest off-reservation school had gangs while 31% (8) of the respondents without gangs indicated that the nearest off-reservation school had gangs.

Fifty-eight percent (29) felt that these problems at the off-reservation schools had "Some Influence" on their reservation youth while 36% (18) felt this was having a "Great Amount of Influence" on their reservation youth while less than 1% felt this was having "No Influence" whatsoever. This variable too, appears to be a potential influence on the presence of gangs.

The initial goal was to conduct statistical analyses of those factors deemed as being associated with the presence or absence of gangs, however, upon closer examination, a major limitation appeared to be in how those particular questions were posed to the respondents. The choices that were provided created too much variation which prevented an accurate analysis between the variables. In hindsight, the format of the questions for this particular area should have been designed to allow such an analysis. Additionally, questions should have been included which would have elicited the officers' perceptions for what might be contributing to the presence or absence of gangs. The format of the survey questions did not provide them this opportunity.

As with non-Indian gangs, there are many contributory factors for gang formation. These officers were asked what they perceived to be the biggest factor contributing to gang formation on their own reservation. Table 5 demonstrates their responses:

Table 5 Gang Formation Reasons N = 45

FACTOR	FREQUENCY	%
Breakdown of the Family	28	62
Boredom (no structured activities)	18	40
Outside Recruitment	10	22
Families moving back-bringing gang life with them	8	17
Media Influence	6	13
Drugs	5	11
Violence in the Home	4	8
Unemployment	3	6
Close to Urban Area w/ high Native community	1	2

Note: Respondents chose more than one answer accounting for a total more than 100%.

From these responses, we see that the breakdown of the family, boredom, and outside recruitment are perceived to be important variables for the formation of gangs.

As the findings indicated, 26 agencies did not have gangs. As part of the research question into what factors may play a role in this absence, the respondents (who indicated that they did not have gangs) were asked what they perceived to be an explanation for the absence of gangs on their reservation. The variables of: Size of the reservation, Location of the reservation, Efforts of the law enforcement agency, Involvement of the Elders, Strong sense of community, a Strong stand by criminal justice agencies and Parental involvement were offered as choices. Table 6 shows (in descending order) the respondents' perceptions of the influence of these variables:

Table 6 Factors for the Absence of Gangs

FACTOR	YES	N	VALID %
Size	23	29	79
Location of the Reservation	22	29	76
Efforts of Law Enforcement	13	25	52
Involvement of Elders	12	21	57
Strong Sense of Community	11	22	50
Strong Stand by Crim. Just.	10	23	43
Parental Involvement	4	20	20

Note: The respondents were able to answer yes to more than one of the above variables.

* One respondent indicated that there was no youth leadership to start or maintain a gang.

As can be seen, the variables of reservation Size, and Location of the reservation were deemed to have the larger influence in keeping gangs away. The variables of: Efforts of the Law enforcement agency, Involvement of the elders, Strong sense of community and Strong stand taken by the elements of the Criminal Justice system (police, courts, prosecutors, etc.) and Parental involvement were seen as having a lesser influence.

Limitations to this specific area was that only respondents without gangs responded to this question, and, the variables of Size, Location, Efforts of law enforcement were not defined nor further delineated.

Indian Gang Characteristics

Figure 3 depicts the years that gangs were first observed by the respondents. The majority (11) of officers indicated 1992 as the year gangs were first observed with the upswing continuing through 1995. Two officers indicated that their reservation has had the presence of gangs from the late 1950's and late 1960's. These responses highlight the "newness" of an Indian gang presence.

Membership size of each gang ranged from 4 to 60 with a mean of 6 members per gang.⁹ Thirty-one percent (15) of the reservations had gang members under 15 years of age while 67% (32) had gang members 16-18 years old, 10% had gang members over 18 years old and less than one percent had gang members of all age ranges.

As was discussed previously in the Literature Review, Indian gangs are not ethnocentric as evidenced by the adoption of Hispanic and African American gang characteristics, particularly in the nomenclature of their gangs, e.g.

⁹ "Wanna-be's were included in this total.

Wedgwood Chicanos, Southside Home Girls, X3 Hooligans, Vice Lords, Southwest Locals, West Side Familia, Little Indian Crips, Rolling 30's, etc. Of the 48 responding agencies, only four indicated that their gangs use distinctly Indian names, e.g. Rez Dwellers, Indian Pride, Sovereign Nation Warriors, Red Pride, Indian Brotherhood, etc. This adoption of Hispanic and/or African American gang names is possibly due to: (1) many of the Indian gang members attending common off-reservation schools which are experiencing gang activity; (2) due to the influence of the surrounding urban areas near the reservations; and/or; (3) due to the influence of the media (particularly rap music, movies, television, etc.).

Again, as discussed in the Literature Review with respect to gender composition of gangs, the vast majority of gang members are male, however, female gangs and female members of male gangs are becoming a growing police problem. This also holds true for American Indian gangs. The majority (69%) of respondents reported female gang members on their reservation with 19% (9) of the agencies indicating they also have female-only gangs, however, their numbers ranged from 1 to 3 gangs per reservation. Greater participation by females in gang activities was observed by 62% (24) of the respondents with 61% (19) reporting that they are becoming more violent in their activities.

Examples of the names the female gangs use include: Rez Girls, Dogs with Style, Black Rose, Locas, Rez Bitches, Latin Queens, etc. (see Campbell, 1990;

Chesney-Lind, Sheldon & Joe, 1996; and Moore & Hagedorn, 1996 for further research on female gang members).

As with non-Indian gangs, Indian gang members wear distinctive clothing which denotes gang affiliation. On the reservations they are currently wearing:

- Oversized, baggy clothing
- Colored bandanas (color depending on gang affiliation)
- Dickeys or khaki pants
- Shirts and caps with sport logos and/or particular professional sports team apparel,
- Extra long belts of red or blue of a specific length and belts with military buckles (which they “engrave” their gang affiliation on the metal)

Their colors of choice are red, blue, black, green and brown (at this time, as the gangs have been known to change their “colors” to avoid being easily identified by law enforcement officers). Tattoos are also used to indicate their gang affiliation with some gang members purposely inflicting burns and scars to indicate the same.

Like other gangs, Indian gangs tend to claim turf (65 percent). Sixty-two percent (26) of the gang members commit their crimes both on and off the reservation, 21% (9) commit their crimes solely on the reservation and 17% (7) commit crimes solely off the reservation. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (89%) indicated that their gang members participate in graffiti activities on the reservation. Indian gang members also utilize the flashing of hand signals/signs as a form of insult or communication to their fellow and/or rival

gang members. Some Indian gang members have even made up business cards that they distribute.

Eighty-one percent (34) of the respondents indicated that Indian gang members participate in specific types of crimes. As can be seen in Table 7, a higher percentage of gangs are involved in Property Crimes and Drug Use/Sales more than Violent crimes.

Table 7 Crime Categories N = 42

CRIME	FREQUENCY	%
Property*	34	81
Drug Use/ Sales	28	66
Violent Persons**	22	52
All Categories	20	48

* Property Crimes included: Thefts, Burglaries, Stolen Vehicles, etc.

** Violent Persons Crimes included: Homicides, any Assaults (with weapons or not), Arsons, etc.

With respect to Drug Use/Sales, the respondents indicated that the drugs of choice were: marijuana (34) followed by methamphetamines (14), crack cocaine (11), heroin (4) and inhalants (3). One officer indicated acid (LSD) use/sales is also present on their reservation.

As indicated in the Literature Review (specifically the articles by Dial and Mydans), there has been an observed increase in violent crimes by Indian gang members on the reservations. For the purposes of this study, 71% (30) of the respondents indicated that violent crimes were committed by the gang members on their reservation. Table 8 indicates the breakdown of the types of Violent Crimes the gangs are reported to be involved in.

Table 8 Violent Crimes N = 42

CRIME	FREQUENCY	%
Fist Fights (between gangs)	32	76
Fights with Stabbings	25	59
Drive-by Shootings	16	38
Assaults (all other weapons)	7	16

Note: The respondents were asked to respond to each of these categories in separate questions.

* Other violent crimes provided by respondents:

Gang rape (1) and Car Jacking and Robbery (1) and Arsons (1).

While Table 8 indicates a high rate of involvement in fist fights between gangs, the media and gang literature have focused on the increased use of weapons by gang members. The respondents in this study have also observed an increase in the use of weapons (to include guns and knives) by gang members as indicated in Table 9.

Table 9 Observed Increase in Weapons N = 40

	FREQ.	%
Yes	27	68
No	13	33

As discussed previously, the literature on American Indians in general include references to the prevalence of alcohol use by Indians. This appears to hold true for Indian gang members as 92% (44) of the respondents indicated that alcohol use is a predominant factor in the lives of gang members. However, 72% (31) of the officers indicated that alcohol use was not any different than non-gang members on the reservation.

Gang researchers have proposed many reasons why youth join gangs.

Some of these reasons were presented in the Literature Review and, as can be seen in Table 10, many of the reasons why Indian youths join gangs were similar.

Table 10 Reasons for Joining Gangs N = 48

REASONS	FREQUENCY	
Poor Home Life	26	55
Seeking an Identity	23	49
Self esteem Building	11	23
Power Seeking	7	15
Recruited	6	13
Money-making	3	
Family ties to the gang	1	

Respondents chose more than one answer accounting for a total more than 100%.

Other reasons provided by the respondents included:

- For protection
- The youth of today are lost
- They have no identity
- Our society today is too fast paced and advanced
- Parents have lost control of their children
- Peer pressure

With respect to the perceived levels of gang activity in their communities, the respondents were asked to rate their communities. Table 11 indicates this rating from highest to lowest:

Table 11 Perceived Levels of Gang Activity N = 66

LEVEL	FREQ.	%
Level 2: Limited	25	38
Level 3: Emerging	22	33
Level 1: No Known	18	27
Level 4: In Crisis	1	2
Level 5: Gang Controlled	--	--

A further description of these levels include:

Level 1: No Known Gang Activity, indicates a community that has some existing gang prevention and education programs; recreation, employment and other programs for their youth; a strong sense of community and family; and, a minimum level of crime and delinquency. **Level 2: Limited Gang Activity**, indicates a community where gangs are near their community; there are sporadic gang crimes and graffiti; there is a limited gang intrusion into the community; there exists a general indifference, denial, and passivity by community members. **Level 3: Emerging Gang Activity**, indicates that there are one or more gangs are in the area; local schools and parks are gang hangouts; there is a loss of community identity and pride; and an increase in gang crimes. **Level 4: Community in Crisis**, indicates a presence of major gang activity and drive-by shootings; parks and schools are dominated by gangs; the community is living in fear; there is an increase in truancy, dropouts and crime; and the police are overburdened. **Level 5 indicates a Gang Controlled Community** where gangs dominate most of daily life; the tax base has eroded with businesses fleeing the community and an “illegal” economy thrives; there is a general breakdown of the family and community; and the institutional response to gangs are overwhelmed. From the responses in Table 11, it can be concluded that the surveyed reservations are at the beginning stages of gang infiltration into their communities as they are experiencing Emerging to Limited Gang Activity at this time.

Law Enforcement Response to Gangs

To address the last research area of how Indian Country law enforcement is responding to gangs, it is necessary to first discuss the demographics and environment of the law enforcement respondents.

There were 54 Tribal Police Departments represented in the survey, 22 BIA law enforcement divisions represented and 1 "Other" which is the Sheriff's Office in Iowa who maintains law enforcement jurisdiction on this reservation.

The number of sworn law enforcement officers employed by the responding agencies ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 328 with 88% (57) of the agencies employing 20 or less officers. While only six of the responding agencies require their officers to be tribal members, 65% of the total number of officers identify themselves as American Indians.¹⁰

Media reports indicate that a major concern in Indian Country law enforcement is the decreasing or lack of funding for law enforcement on the reservations (see Clark, 1996; Associated Press, 1997; and Porterfield, 1997). This is also a problem for the surveyed agencies as 84% (59) indicated a noticeable decrease in their law enforcement funding. An obvious result of this decrease in funding is fewer officers are left to respond to reports of crimes. These surveyed officers, by a large majority (75%), indicated that they do not have enough officers to effectively address the crime problems on the

¹⁰ This fact may or may not have implications for the future with respect to dealing with gangs on the reservations.

reservation. This lack of manpower and funding has serious implications for how reservation law enforcement prevents/fights crime in general and gang formation/crime in particular.

Due to the lack of resources and manpower for many Indian Country law enforcement agencies, including the recent widespread budget cuts effecting BIA personnel, many reservation law enforcement agencies have resorted to cross deputization or mutual aid agreements with surrounding municipal, county or state law enforcement agencies. These agreements have allowed agencies to supplement manpower, technological resources, information sharing and so forth. The majority (77%) of these agencies have such agreements or are cross-deputized with their nearest law enforcement agency. Forty-six percent (25) have agreements with both county and municipal agencies, 35% (19) have agreements with their county Sheriff's Department, and less than 1% (5) have agreements with their nearest municipal police department. Additional agencies included in these agreements were: BIA (8), State Patrol (4), Sister Tribes (2) and/or the National Park Service (2).

Many urban law enforcement agencies have come to utilize the benefits of multiple agency Task Forces to fight specific crimes. While the majority of the surveyed agencies do not or have not utilized task forces, 47% have. These task forces include such federal agencies as the FBI, DEA, ATF, in addition to county and municipal law enforcement agencies. These task forces have been formed

to fight drug activities (30), with secondary efforts towards violent crime (14) and gang activities (14).

Law enforcement agencies generally practice three responses to crime: Suppression Only (to include arrests of gang members, incarceration of leaders, use of task forces, and so on); Prevention Only (to include the involvement of the schools, courts and probation departments, educational programs involving the community, and so on), or a Combination of both. The majority of respondent departments (71%) utilize the Combination of suppression and prevention responses, 24 percent (12) utilize Prevention only and less than 1% (3) utilize Suppression only.

Law enforcement efforts towards effectively dealing with gangs includes awareness and training activities. The majority (66%) of responding agencies have such awareness and training. However, the implementation of Statutory Codes/Laws has not caught up with this officer awareness which is indicated by less than 1% (6) of responding agencies having such Codes in place (while 92% do not). Of the few that do have Tribal Codes for dealing with gangs, one tribe's Code provides for enhancements for gang related crimes.¹¹

Technical resources and information sharing are becoming integral in the tracking and intelligence gathering on gangs in law enforcement across the

¹¹ Where officers no longer need a "signed" victim to prosecute for gang violence, in other words the victim does not have to be the complainant, the State becomes the victim. This respondent indicated that this has put a stop to the large gang fights where no one wants to press charges.

country, however, this is not yet widespread in Indian Country law enforcement. Only 20% (14) of the responding agencies utilize computers for this law enforcement function. Another common police practice is the taking of photos of gang members (both suspected or identified) while they are on the street “hanging out”. One-half (31) of the responding agencies are allowed to perform this practice.

In Indian Country, Tribal Councils are the leading governing body over the reservation. Tribal Council support is vital if the law enforcement agency is to be successful in its efforts in dealing with crime in general and gangs specifically. A majority of the respondent’s (82%) indicated that they have this support from their Council. Additionally, 63% (36) of respondent agencies were making a concerted effort at working with their Tribal Council to bring about changes in policies and/or laws dealing with gangs on the reservations.

Programs implemented by reservation law enforcement agencies follow those of non-reservation police in that they are taking a three pronged approach involving law enforcement procedures, the community and the schools. Table 12 indicates a compilation of the responses pertaining to the programs or efforts that are being undertaken by reservation law enforcement in their efforts to prevent and/or fight gangs.

Table 12 Programs N = 45

Programs	Frequency
COMMUNITY EFFORTS:	
Gang/Drug/Alcohol Awareness Programs & Presentations	9
Neighborhood Watch Presentations	2
Improve Tribal Ordinances re: gangs	1
Recreational Activities	1
Use of "Talking Circle" w/ parents & teens	1
Ex-gang member community counselor	1
Elders as CSO's	1
Interacting w/ juveniles using tribal customs or beliefs	1
SCHOOLS/JUVENILES:	
DARE/GREAT presentations to schools	10
Juvenile Programs	1
Group Homes	1
Improve school policies twds gangs = Zero Tolerance twds gangs	1
Treat truancy – prevention or when occurs	1
LAW ENFORCEMENT:	
High Visibility	4
Network with other agencies	2
Strong Prosecution	2
Membership in multi-agency task forces	2
Drug Elimination Programs	1
Outside resources that have experience w/ gangs	1
Use former gang members as Police Explorers	1
Use of Exclusion of gang members/families	1

At this time, very few of the agencies (11%) have programs in place that attempt to help active gang members get out of the gang. For those that do, some of these efforts include: Culturally motivated programs, monthly meetings held between incarcerated gang members and the community, and the GITEM program (out of the Arizona State Police).

As the findings indicate, gangs are making their presence known on many reservations across the country. It was important to ascertain the respondents' suggestions for what it would take for their agency and community to "turn the

situation around" with respect to gang presence on their reservations. Table 13 is a condensed version of their responses with the responses broken down into specific category areas.

Table 13 Respondents Solutions N = 41

Responses	Number of Responses
The Community	22
Law Enforcement	10
The Family	6
The Courts and Probation	4
Schools	3

Note: While 41 officers responded to this question, many of their responses overlapped categories.

As Table 13 indicates, the majority of respondents perceived the greatest solution to gangs incorporated the Community. The respondents however, indicated within this response that it was necessary to turn the gang situation around through the combination of community members working with law enforcement, families, the schools, the courts and probation systems if there was to be improvement or prevention efforts towards the gang situation. The respondents indicated that they can not address the gang issue through law enforcement means alone, that it will take a cooperative effort from all segments of the community.

Chapter V Summary and Conclusions

Summary

Stated several times throughout this thesis was the fact that there is a lack of information and academic research on American Indian gangs. To begin to fill in that gap of information was the goal of this research project. This goal has been accomplished through the presentation of the research conducted with Tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs officers nationwide. The following is a summation of what has been learned about American Indian gangs.

Conditions which are conducive for the formation of gangs on the reservations can be attributed to historical events. As discussed previously, the treatment of the Indian people at the hands of the U.S. government has had far reaching consequences that continue to impact Indian Country today. The creation of reservations, while currently looked upon as places where Indians can maintain their cultural identity and traditions, still does not negate the fact that the original location/placement of reservations has prevented, in many cases, viable economic bases and self-sufficiency leading to a continued reliance on government handouts. This only promotes dependence, loss of self-esteem and hopelessness. There is also a high level of substance abuse, a high poverty/low employment rate and loss of cultural identity. As the gang literature tells us, these conditions are not dissimilar to those found in the inner city. Because of

these similarities, we should not be surprised that Indian gangs have emerged on the reservations.

The five theories briefly discussed, share similar important points, namely that participation in crime by American Indians is a result of particular conditions that have been created through historical events. These theories address the realities of Indian life which include: the breakdown of the Indian family, feelings of powerlessness, loss of cultural traditions and identity, impoverished economic conditions on the reservations, continued abuse of alcohol and so forth. The findings of this study also reflect these realities.

Addressing the first research area regarding the extent of American Indian gangs, it is now known that there is an Indian gang presence in 16 states across the country. Indian gangs were found to be in the Northwest (2 states), Midwest (7 states, mostly in the upper tier states), Southwest (3 states), the West (2 states), South and Southeast (1 state each). Sections of the country that indicated an absence of Indian gangs included the Northeastern states as well as across the midsection of the country (from Utah across to Virginia).

To ascertain if there were factors on the reservations that influence the presence of gangs, the variables of: reservation size, economic conditions, distance from the nearest urban center, presence of federally funded housing and the presence of gangs on the nearest off-reservation schools were examined. The findings indicated that land size of the reservations with gangs

were almost equal to that of non-gang reservations, however, population figures were higher for reservations with gangs than without. This indicates a support of the assumption that the larger the reservation the more likely there would be a presence of gangs, however, a more sophisticated statistical analysis and concise figures would be necessary before a definite statement can be made. The variables of poverty level and presence of gangs on the nearest off reservation schools were the two variables that appear to be influential on the presence of gangs. Reservations with gangs appear to suffer worse economic conditions than non-gang reservations which supports the assumption that the higher the poverty level, the more likely there is to be a presence of gangs. More respondents from reservations with gangs reported that their nearest off-reservation schools had gangs. This finding supports the assumption that if there is a presence of gangs on the nearest off reservation school then there would be a presence of gangs on that reservation.

The variable of distance from the nearest urban center appears to have little influence on the presence of gangs. The assumption was that the closer a reservation was to an urban center, the more likely there would be a gang presence since the close proximity would lend itself to increased exposure of reservation youths to gangs. This assumption was not supported as reservations with and without gangs had approximately the same number of reservations less than 15 miles away as they did more than 15 miles away. The existence of

federally funded housing areas on the reservations also appeared to have little influence on the presence of gangs as the same percentage of reservations with gangs as without indicated the presence of these housing areas.

As the findings indicate, these variables show potential as indicators for explaining the presence or the absence of gangs and should be investigated further.

The reasons for gang formation on the reservations were found to be similar to non-Indian gangs in the areas of: the breakdown of the family; lack of structured activities (specifically a lack of recreational and employment opportunities); recruitment by other gang members and family ties to gangs; media influence; and, use/sales of drugs.

As the findings indicated, there were 26 agencies that did not have a gang presence. An examination of these specific reservations indicated that reservation size and location were influential in the absence of gangs. While there were methodological limitations to this area (as discussed previously), these findings still invite further investigation into finding factors influential on the absence of gangs.

The findings reported here indicate that there is much variation in the levels of gang activity on the reservations. This variation includes: some reservations experiencing severe problems (with gang-related violence occurring

on a frequent basis); many at the beginning stages of gang formation and activities; and, others with negligible signs of gang activity.

Addressing the second research area of Indian gang characteristics, we can now present a profile of American Indian gangs and their gang members:

- Indian gangs are a recent phenomenon in Indian Country as indicated by the officers who reported that gangs first made their presence known in the late 1980's with the highest number of gangs appearing in 1992 with a continued upswing through 1995.
- Membership size is smaller than for other ethnic gangs, however, indications are that the potential for increase is inevitable.
- Indian gangs are not ethnocentric as indicated by the emulation of Hispanic and African American gangs through adoption/variation of gang names as well as behaviors.
- Indian gangs are male dominated, however there are indications that female members/participants are growing on the reservations.
- Indian gangs wear distinctive clothing which also emulates that of Hispanic and/or African American gangs. As part of this emulation, Indian gangs also claim turf, use graffiti and hand signals as forms of communication.
- Indian gang members commit crimes both on and off the reservation.
- The respondents indicated that Indian gang members participate more in property and drug crimes than violent crimes. Violent crimes committed by

Indian gangs generally involve inter-gang fist fights, however gang fights with stabbings have increased as has participation in drive-by shootings.

Respondent officers have also seen an increased use of weapons.

- Alcohol use is prevalent by Indian gang members as well as non-gang youths.
- Indian gang members join gangs for similar reasons as non-Indian gang members: a poor home life, seeking identity, self-esteem building, seeking power, being recruited, family ties, and so on.
- The perceived levels of Indian gang activity is at the Emerging to Limited gang activity level.

As the findings and gang literature tell us, there are many contributory factors present which lead youths to join gangs. These factors appear to be universal for all ethnic groups who participate in gangs, however, there is one important difference between Indian gangs and other youth gangs. Youths in Indian Country feel that they are "between cultures"; that is, they are exposed to the "traditionalists" on the reservations (whether it be the Elders or those adults on the reservation who feel that going back to their traditional ways will bring balance back to the Indian community) while also experiencing the very strong pull from the non-Indian gang youths at their off-reservation schools. Results of this dichotomy in exposures can lead to the questioning of their identity with many youths seeing the gang lifestyle as a solution to this identity crisis.

It was thought that with so many reservations reporting the presence of gangs and media sources reporting increased crime and violence on the reservations due to this gang presence, that the respondents would have indicated their most pressing crime problem on the reservations was violent juvenile crime. Instead, the respondents indicated that their most pressing crime problem were the alcohol associated crimes. However, the respondents also indicated higher rates of concern for juvenile crime than for adult crime. It is interesting, but not necessarily surprising, that the media is focusing on the violent aspects of Indian gangs, even though the respondents provided a much less violent portrayal of the Indian gangs on the reservation. This may be due to the newness of Indian gangs and the media possibly exaggerating the violence that is present. The findings for this research could also be skewed since the reservations that these media articles covered did not all respond to the survey. If they had, perhaps the findings would have been different in that there would have been higher levels of violent acts represented.

Addressing the last research area of law enforcement response to gangs, it was important to look at reservation law enforcement since these officers are the “first responders” and are aware of what is happening in the community. They are also the ones that deal with the aftermath of a gang’s violent crimes. As indicated by the responses, there were more Tribal Police Departments represented than BIA Law Enforcement agencies. This factor may have

implications for dealing with gang members as the Tribal Police may have more positive encounters with gang members than the BIA Law Enforcement Agent as Tribal Police Departments are employed/paid by the Tribe and accountable to the Tribal community as compared to BIA officers accountable to a faraway bureaucracy. This fact along with the finding that 65% of the reservation law enforcement officers identify themselves as American Indians could have positive implications for dealing with the culture of Indian gangs. This would be a two-fold benefit as, (1) the youths would see their tribal police officers as “one of them” thus decreasing some of the built in animosity towards law enforcement that comes with gang membership, and, (2) for the officers benefit, there would be greater identification with the reservation community through their shared Indian heritage. Tribal police officers, may be more likely to utilize tribal customs and traditions in conjunction with non-Indian law enforcement practices in dealing with gangs. That is not to take away the effectiveness of the professional police officers with the BIA, but it would be an area of interest for future research to see if Tribal Police are more effective in combating reservation gangs.

While it was surprising that there was much contact with non-reservation law enforcement through the utilization of cross deputization and mutual aid agreements, it should not be surprising that reservation law enforcement rely on these agreements not only for extra manpower for fighting crime on the reservations and surrounding areas, but as the findings indicate, Indian gang

members commit their crimes both on and off the reservations. Working together will aid both reservation and non-reservation police agencies in the apprehension of these offenders. These agreements and cross training in police techniques are also important because Indian youths, through their participation in gangs, are displaying non-traditional Indian behaviors. This cross training provides additional tools and skills for dealing with gang members. Additionally, reservations have become opportune for gang members to infiltrate or retreat to because they know that it is an area they can hide, due to the abundance of space and low numbers of law enforcement officers available to detect their activities.

One of the important findings about reservation law enforcement response to gangs was the use of programs and/or efforts that emphasized a multi-faceted approach. The respondents were very aware that law enforcement can not solve this problem alone, that there are deeper social and cultural issues present which requires the whole community coming together to create an environment on the reservations that will either lessen the presence or keep gangs away.

Conclusions

What these findings indicate is that the formation and presence of Indian gangs and how reservation law enforcement agencies can best address gangs

and gang members in their communities is a complex issue at best. As in the non-Indian society, there is no simple solution. It will take the efforts of many components of Indian society working together towards effectively dealing with gangs and their associated crime activities.

Indian gangs are in their infancy and can be considered transitional. They are attempting to build “traditions”, but have not been around long enough. Because of this situation, the opportunities for further research and intervention are exceptionally timely.

This research serves as a starting point for understanding Indian gang formation and gang characteristics. As the findings highlight the similarities and differences in characteristics of Indian gangs with other ethnic gangs, we now have a basis from which to draw for further research. A future goal is to find effective prevention and intervention techniques for the Indian communities to utilize in dealing with the emerging gang presence on the reservations.

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APPENDIX A PILOT STUDY SURVEY

1. Name of Reservation: _____

2. Location of Reservation: _____

3. Name of your law enforcement agency: _____

4. What tribe(s) constitutes the population of this Reservation?

5. What is the population of the Reservation? _____

6. Is there a portion of the Reservation owned/lived on by non-Indian residents?

YES

NO

6a. If YES, what is the percentage of non-Indian residents? _____

7. How many law enforcement officers are employed by your department? _____

8. Which of the following grants your officers their law enforcement powers?

- _____ Tribal statutes
- _____ State statutes
- _____ Cross deputization with county or state law enforcement agencies
- _____ Federal statutes (via BIA/BLM)
- _____ All of the above
- _____ Other: please explain:

9. Where do your officers receive their law enforcement training? (Please check all that applies):

- _____ A Tribal Police Academy
- _____ An outside Agency Police Academy (ex. nearest regional law enforcement training center)
- _____ Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement training center
- _____ On the job training (i.e. no formal academy training)
- _____ Other (please explain):

10. Where does your law enforcement agency receive it's funding? (Please check all that applies):

- _____ The Tribe
- _____ The Federal Government (via BIA/BLM-LE Division)
- _____ State funding
- _____ Other (please explain):

11. Are there any officers in your department who are designated Gang Officers?

YES NO

11a. If there are, how many officers are so designated? _____

11b. How are these officers picked for this assignment? (Please check all that apply):

_____ Officer requests assignment
 _____ Officer is assigned to this position by the Administration
 _____ Officer performs this function in addition to his/her other duties
 _____ Other (please explain):

11c. What type of training do the Gang officers receive? (Please check all that apply):

_____ Law Enforcement Academy
 _____ Outside Agency sponsored classes
 _____ On their own
 _____ Other (please explain):

12. If you do not have designated Gang Officers, do you have officers who work specifically with juveniles (aka Juvenile Officers)?

YES NO

12a. If so, how many are there? _____

13. Which of the following crimes are most often committed by the juveniles on the Reservation?

_____ Homicide	_____ Assault w/ deadly weapon
_____ Assault and Battery	_____ Residential Burglary
_____ Commercial Burglary	_____ Vehicle Burglary
_____ Robbery	_____ Thefts (Felony)
_____ Thefts (Misdemeanor)	_____ Sexual Assault
_____ Vandalism	_____ Tagging/Graffiti
_____ Alcohol related crimes	_____ Other (please explain):

13a. Of these crimes that you checked in question 13, which ones would you consider the most problematic to your law enforcement efforts? (Please list in order of seriousness from most problematic to least problematic with 1 being the most problematic for your agency):

_____	Homicide	_____	Assault w/ deadly weapon
_____	Assault and Battery	_____	Residential Burglary
_____	Commercial Burglary	_____	Vehicle Burglary
_____	Robbery	_____	Thefts (Felony)
_____	Thefts (Misdemeanor)	_____	Sexual Assault
_____	Vandalism	_____	Tagging/Graffiti
_____	Alcohol related crimes	_____	Other (please explain):

13b. Which of the following crimes are committed by the gang members in your jurisdiction: (Please check all that apply):

_____	Homicide	_____	Assault w/ deadly weapon
_____	Assault and Battery	_____	Residential Burglary
_____	Commercial Burglary	_____	Vehicle Burglary
_____	Robbery	_____	Thefts (Felony)
_____	Thefts (Misdemeanor)	_____	Sexual Assault
_____	Vandalism	_____	Tagging/Graffiti
_____	Alcohol related crimes	_____	Not applicable
_____	Other (please explain):		

14. Have you observed an increase or decrease in crime by juveniles in the past 5 years? (please check the one that applies):

_____ INCREASE
_____ DECREASE

14a. Have you observed an increase or decrease in violent criminal acts committed by juveniles?

_____ INCREASE
_____ DECREASE

14b. If an increase in violent crimes, what do you attribute this increase to? (please check all that applies):

_____	Unemployment	_____	Boredom
_____	Gang activities	_____	Drugs
_____	Weapon Availability	_____	Media influence
_____	Experience violence in the home		
_____	Breakdown of family structure		

14c. If a decrease, what do you attribute this decrease to? (Please check all that apply):

- ☐ Law enforcement prevention efforts
- ☐ School programs for "at risk youth"
- ☐ Better job opportunities
- ☐ Increased coordination in prevention/adjudication efforts by schools, police, courts and probation department(s)
- ☐ Increased parental participation/support
- ☐ Other (Please explain):

15. Do you have any identified gangs on the reservation in your jurisdiction?

YES NO

15a. If yes, what are the names of the gang(s)?

15b. What percentage of the juvenile population would you say belongs to this gang or gangs? _____

15c. What is the age range of these gang members? (Please check all that applies):

- ☐ below 10 yrs old
- ☐ 11-15 yrs old
- ☐ 16-18 yrs old
- ☐ Over 18 yrs old

15d. Are there any identified active adult (over 18) gang members on the Reservation?

YES NO

15e. Are there any identified female gang members?

YES NO

15f. If YES, which of the following crimes are these females involved in?
(Please check all that apply):

☐	Homicide	☐	Assault w/ deadly weapon
☐	Assault and Battery	☐	Residential Burglary
☐	Commercial Burglary	☐	Vehicle Burglary
☐	Robbery	☐	Thefts (Felony)
☐	Thefts (Misdemeanor)	☐	Sexual Assault
☐	Vandalism	☐	Tagging/Graffiti
☐	Alcohol related crimes	☐	Other (please explain):

15g. Which of the following do you see as the reason(s) for individuals (who reside on the Reservation) for joining gangs and participating in gang crimes?
(Please check all that apply):

☐ A lack of employment opportunities

☐ Boredom

☐ Gang recruitment from off reservation

☐ Peer pressure from other gang members

☐ Drugs or alcohol

☐ Breakdown of traditional family structure/seeking a sense of family through the gang

☐ Seeking power and/or respect

☐ School problems

☐ Other: Please explain

15h. With respect to gang composition, which of the following determines which gang an individual will join (Please check all that apply):

☐ Based on familial/clan ties

☐ Based on geographical area of residence

☐ Other: please explain:

15i. Which of the following observed indicators/behaviors would cause your agency to categorize individuals as gang members?

☐ Style of clothing (baseball caps, baggy jeans, tennies, etc.)

☐ Tattoos

☐ Caught "tagging"/writing graffiti on property

☐ Participating in drive-by shooting(s)

☐ Participating in assaults/retaliations on other identified gang members

☐ School binders or book covers marked with gang symbols

☐ Associating with other agency identified gang members

☐ Flashing "gang signs"

☐ Other (Please explain):

15J. Which year did gang activity/crime come to the attention of your law enforcement agency? _____

15K. If this is within the past 5 years, what do you think precipitated the formation of gangs on your reservation?

- _____ Conditions on the reservation
 _____ Political upheaval on the reservation
 _____ Outside the reservation "recruiting"
 _____ Other (please explain):

16. How many elementary schools are on the reservation? _____

16a. How many middle schools (Junior High schools)? _____

16b. How many High Schools? _____

16c. How many Community Colleges (2 year)? _____

16d. If there are no schools on the reservation, where do the students attend school? (that is if off-reservation, what is the nearest school they attend?) _____

17. Are there organized activities available for juveniles on the Reservation (to include school & non-school related activities)?

YES NO

17a. If YES, what types of activities are there (please check all that applies):

- _____ After school sports activities
 _____ Teen community center with organized activities available
 _____ Work/study programs
 _____ Volunteer programs
 _____ Other: please explain:

18. Are there specific programs in place by your law enforcement agency which are geared towards working with juveniles as a means of preventing criminal/gang activity?

YES NO

18a. If YES, which of the following types of programs and/or activities are involved? (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Officers teaching gang/drug resistance in the schools
- ☐ Officer mentoring type program with the juveniles
- ☐ Organized "kids vs. cops" teams for baseball, basketball, etc.
- ☐ Police/Courts/Probation Depts. "Zero Tolerance" programs
- ☐ Officers involved with parenting skills classes
- ☐ Other: Please elaborate:

18b. Which of the following strategies does your agency employ in attempting to deal with gang members and their activities (please check that which applies):

- ☐ Strong law enforcement emphasis (i.e. arrests of gang members, incarceration of the leaders, etc.)
- ☐ Strong prevention emphasis (use of schools, courts, probation programs to prevent gang membership/activities)
- ☐ A combination of both law enforcement emphasis and prevention activities
- ☐ Other (Please elaborate):

19. If your agency/reservation has not experienced gang crime/activity, why do you think this is so?

- ☐ Location of reservation
- ☐ Efforts by law enforcement agency
- ☐ Strong sense of community
- ☐ Strong preservation of cultural identity
- ☐ Other (please elaborate):

19a. If your agency/reservation is experiencing gang crime/activity, why do you think this is so?

- ☐ Outside recruitment by established gang members
- ☐ Social conditions on the reservation
- ☐ Political upheaval on the reservation
- ☐ Gang activities persist in spite of law enforcement efforts
- ☐ Other (please elaborate)

Please feel free to add ANY other comments/observations, etc. that you feel may be helpful to this study. Any further elaboration on the questions above and/or information will be of a great help.

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX B

FINAL SURVEY

1. Name of the reservation: _____
2. In which state are you located: _____
3. What is your geographical location: (e.g. S/W Oklahoma, N/W Montana N/E Arizona, etc.) _____
4. How many square miles does the reservation cover? _____
5. How many miles is the nearest urban area from the reservation?
_____ Less than 1 mile
_____ 1-5 miles
_____ 6-10 miles
_____ 11-15 miles
_____ More than 15 miles away
6. What is the approximate adult (over 18) population of the reservation?

- 6a. What is the approximate population of juveniles (under 18) on the reservation? _____
7. What tribe(s) live on this reservation/Nation/Community?
8. How would you rate the economic conditions on the reservation?
_____Excellent _____Good _____Fair _____Poor _____Really awful
9. Are there any federally funded housing projects on the reservation (*HUD housing*)?
_____YES _____NO
- 9a. If yes, do these housing areas pose a law enforcement problem?
_____YES _____NO

9b. If so, please indicate which one of the following poses the greatest problem?

_____ Alcohol related crimes (being under the influence/fights, etc.)

_____ Drug related (being under the influence, sales, etc.)

_____ Gang activity (violence, graffiti, etc.)

_____ Domestic Violence

Other: _____

9c. Are there any crime prevention programs involving the community and law enforcement in these housing areas?

_____ YES

_____ NO

10. How many elementary schools are on the reservation? _____

10a. How many K-12 schools on the reservation? _____

10b. How many High Schools are on the reservation? _____

10c. Are there any boarding schools on the reservation?

_____ YES _____ NO

10d. Do you have a Tribal Community College on the reservation?

_____ YES _____ NO

10e. How many miles away is the nearest off-reservation school? _____

11. Is there a gambling casino on your reservation? _____ YES _____ NO

11a. If yes, has this brought any particular crime problems?

_____ YES _____ NO

11b. If yes, what types of crimes/problems?

_____ Alcohol related crimes

_____ Drug related crimes

_____ Violence (Robberies, etc.)

_____ All of the above

Other: _____

11c. Has the casino contributed positively to the conditions on the reservation?

_____ YES _____ NO

11d. If so, in which way: _____

12. What is the name of your law enforcement agency: _____

13. What year was your law enforcement agency established? _____

14. How many total sworn law enforcement officers are employed by your department? _____

15. Do you employ part-time officers? _____ YES _____ NO

15a. If so, how many are employed? _____

16. How many civilian personnel (non-sworn) are employed by your department?

17. If your law enforcement agency is a Tribal Police Department, are your officers required to be tribal members? _____ YES _____ NO

18. How many of your officers identify themselves as American Indians? _____

19. Does your department utilize reserve officers to assist with patrol assignments or other assignments? _____ YES _____ NO

20. Does your agency have officers who are in specialty assignments?
_____ YES _____ NO

If yes:

20a. Does your agency have Community Service Officers? _____ YES _____ NO

20b. Does your agency have Juvenile officers? _____ YES _____ NO

20c. Does your agency have Detectives? _____ YES _____ NO

20d. Does your agency have Gang officers? _____ YES _____ NO

20e. Does your agency have DARE officers? _____ YES _____ NO

20f. Please list any other specialty assignments not listed above:

21. Do you have any female officers on your department? _____ YES _____ NO

21a. If so, how many female officers are on your department? _____

21b. What year was the first female officer hired by your department? _____

22. Does your police station have holding cells for arrestees?
_____ YES _____ NO

22a. If not, how many miles away must you go to book a prisoner? _____

23. Do you have Cross-deputization or Mutual Aid Agreements with any other law enforcement agency in your area? _____ YES _____ NO

23a. If yes, do you have this agreement with the nearest municipal police dept.?
 _____ YES _____ NO

23b. Do you have this agreement with the County Sheriff's Department?
 _____ YES _____ NO

23c. Please list any other type of agency you may have cross-deputization or a Mutual Aid Agreement with :

24. Does your agency utilize a Tribal Police Academy for training your police officers? _____ YES _____ NO

25. Does your agency utilize an off-reservation regional police academy?
 _____ YES _____ NO

26. Does your agency utilize a Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement academy?
 _____ YES _____ NO

27. Does your agency have a formal in-service/in-house training program?
 _____ YES _____ NO

28. How many of your officers are Training Officers? _____

29. What is the primary funding source for your law enforcement agency? Please select one of the following:

_____ The Tribe

_____ The Federal Government (via BIA/BLM-LE Division)

_____ State Funding

_____ Grants

Other:

29a. Have you noticed a decrease in funding for your law enforcement agency?
 _____ YES _____ NO

31. Do you have a high turnover rate of police officers? _____ YES _____ NO

34. Does your agency utilize a Task Force to combat a particular crime problem?
 _____ YES _____ NO

34a. If yes, which agency (or agencies) are you working with?

_____ FBI

_____ Other Federal Agency (Drug Enforcement Agency, ATF, etc.)

34b. If so, was this task force developed to address Violent crimes (homicides, etc.)? ☐ YES ☐ NO

34c. Was this task force developed to address Gang activities/crime? ☐ YES ☐ NO

34d. Was this task force developed to address Drug activities? ☐ YES ☐ NO

34e. Please list any other reasons for the Task Force:

35. Do you feel you have enough officers to effectively address the crime problems on the reservation? ☐ YES ☐ NO

36. In general, how receptive is the reservation community to your law enforcement efforts?

☐ Very receptive

☐ They tolerate us

☐ Uncooperative, hostile

Other:

37. Does your agency practice the tenets of Community Oriented Policing? ☐ YES ☐ NO

38. What is the most pressing law enforcement problem on the reservation? Please choose one of the following:

☐ Domestic Violence

☐ Alcohol usage (and resulting associated crimes)

☐ Drug usage (and resulting associated crimes)

☐ Non-violent juvenile crime (theft, vandalism, graffiti, joy riding etc.)

☐ Violent juvenile crime (e.g. homicide, assaults with deadly weapon, drive-by shootings, robbery, rapes, etc.)

☐ Non-violent adult crime (thefts, burglary, vehicle theft, vandalism etc.)

☐ Violent adult crime (homicide, assaults with deadly weapons, driveby shootings, robberies, rapes, etc.)

☐ Child Abuse (Sexual and physical)

☐ Other (Please elaborate):

39. Is alcohol widely used by the youth on the reservation? ☐ YES ☐ NO

39a. Are drugs widely used by the youth on the reservation?

_____YES _____NO

39b. Are inhalants widely used by the youth on the reservation?

_____YES _____NO

39c. Do the levels of alcohol and/or drug abuse create a law enforcement problem for your agency? _____YES _____NO

40. Have you observed an increase or decrease in crime in general by juveniles on the reservation in the past 5 years?

_____INCREASE _____DECREASE _____NO CHANGE

41. Have you observed an increase or decrease in VIOLENT crime by juveniles on the reservation in the past 5 years?

_____INCREASE _____DECREASE _____NO CHANGE

41a. If you've observed an INCREASE, in what specific type of crime have you observed this increase? Please check one:

_____ Homicides

_____ Robberies

_____ Assaults

_____ Drive-by shootings

_____ Rapes

Other: _____

41b. What do you think is the primary reason for this increase?

41c. If you have seen a DECREASE in violent crime, what do you think is the primary reason for this?

42. Do you have identified gangs on the reservation? _____YES _____NO

42a. If so, how many identified gangs are there? _____

42b. What is the size of each gang (i.e. how many "members" are in each gang?)

43. What year did your department begin to notice gang activity on the reservation? _____

44. With respect to the names these gangs call themselves:

44a. Do these names reflect their Native American heritage?

_____ Yes _____ No

44b. Do these names reflect an Hispanic alliance?

_____ YES _____ NO

44c. Do these names reflect an African-American alliance?

_____ YES _____ NO

45. What is the general age range of these gang members? Please choose one:

_____ Below 15 years old

_____ 16-18 years old

_____ Over 18 years old

46. Do you have any identified active adult (*over 18*) gang members on the reservation? _____ YES _____ NO

47. Are there any identified female gang members on the reservation?

_____ YES _____ NO

47a. Do you have any female-only gangs on the reservation?

_____ YES _____ NO

47b. If yes, how many female-only gangs are there? _____

47c. What names do these girl gangs call themselves?

47d. Have you noticed greater participation by females in gang activities/crimes?

_____ YES _____ NO

47e. Would you say these females are becoming more violent in their activities?

_____ YES _____ NO

48. Are there particular types of clothing that gang members wear that let you (*as an officer*) know that they belong to a gang? _____ YES _____ NO

48a. If yes, what types of clothing/accessories do they wear?:

49. Do the gang members on your reservation use tattoos to indicate their gang affiliation? _____ YES _____ NO

49a. Do the gang members on your reservation purposely inflict burns/scars on their arms and hands to indicate gang affiliation? _____ YES _____ NO

50. Do the gangs on your reservation "claim turf"? _____ YES _____ NO

51. Do the gangs use stolen vehicles to commit their crimes?

_____ YES _____ NO

52. Where do the gangs prefer to commit their crimes? Please check one:

_____ On the reservation

_____ Off the reservation

_____ Both on and off the reservation

53. Are violent crimes committed by these gangs? _____ YES _____ NO

53a. If so, do they participate in Drive-bys/shootings? _____ YES _____ NO

53b. Do they participate in fist fights between gangs? _____ YES _____ NO

53c. Are they involved in fights where stabbings occur? _____ YES _____ NO

53d. Please list any other violent act that they participate in:

54. Are these gangs involved in any specific type of crime?

_____ YES _____ NO

If Yes:

54a. Are they involved in property crimes? _____ YES _____ NO

54b. Are they involved in violent person crimes? _____ YES _____ NO

54c. Are they involved in drug sales? _____ YES _____ NO

54d. Please list any other specific type of crime not mentioned above:

55. Have you observed an increase in use of weapons by gang members (i.e. guns, & knives)? _____ YES _____ NO

56. Are these gang members also involved in drug use and sales?

_____ YES _____ NO

56a. If so, what is the drug of choice? Please choose one:

_____ Inhalants

_____ Crack Cocaine

_____ Methamphetamine

_____ Heroin

_____ Marijuana

56b. Does alcohol play a role in the lives of these gang members?

_____ YES _____ NO

56c. Is their drug/alcohol usage any different than non-gang members on the reservation? _____ YES _____ NO

57. Are these gang members involved in graffiti activities?

_____ YES _____ NO

58. Are there "taggers" on the reservation? _____YES _____NO

59. Are the nearest off-reservations schools experiencing gang problems?
_____YES _____NO

59a. How big of an influence do you feel this is having on the reservation youths?
Please check one:

_____No Influence _____Some Influence _____Great Amount Of Influence

59b. Are these off-reservation schools taking any steps to address the gang problem? _____YES _____NO

59c. If so, what steps are they taking?

60. What is the biggest reason that you feel is contributing to the formation of juvenile gangs on your particular reservation? Please check one:

- _____ Unemployment
- _____ Boredom (no structured activities for young people)
- _____ Breakdown of the family
- _____ Experiencing violence in the home
- _____ Drugs
- _____ Media Influence
- _____ Families moving back to the reservation and bringing gang "life" with them
- _____ Outside recruitment

OTHER:

61. What do you think is the primary reason young people on your reservation get involved with gangs to begin with? Please check one:

- _____ Self-esteem building
- _____ Power seeking
- _____ Poor home life
- _____ Family ties to the gang life
- _____ Seeking an identity
- _____ Recruited from the neighborhood
- _____ Money-making opportunities

OTHER:

62. If your agency has designated gang officers, generally, where do they obtain their training (*to include GREAT/DARE officers as well*)? Please choose one:

- ☐ Law enforcement Academy
- ☐ Outside Agency sponsored training classes
- ☐ On their own
- ☐ Regional Gang Investigators Association meetings
- ☐ Gang training sponsored by the Tribe
- ☐ Doesn't receive any training

OTHER:

63. How is the reservation community (*particularly the parents*) responding to any law enforcement efforts towards dealing with gang problems?

- ☐ Denial
- ☐ Cooperative - Assisting in anyway they can
- ☐ Apathetic

OTHER:

64. Which of the following strategies does your agency use in attempting to deal with gang members and their activities - Please check one:

- ☐ Strong law enforcement/suppression emphasis i.e. arrests of gang members, incarceration of the leaders, use of task forces, etc.
- ☐ Strong prevention emphasis, i.e. use of schools, courts, probation depts., educational programs, etc. to prevent gang membership/activities
- ☐ A combination of both suppression and prevention efforts

65. What "programs" or efforts is your agency attempting as a means of preventing and/or fighting the gang problem?

66. Do you have any programs or efforts in place which attempt to help active gang members get out of the gang? ☐ YES ☐ NO

66a. If so, which type of programs or efforts are being undertaken?

67. Of the following levels, where would you rate your community with respect to gang activity? Please choose one:

_____ LEVEL 1: No Known Gang Activity: have some existing gang prevention & education programs//recreation, employment & other programs for youth//strong sense of community & family//Minimum crime & delinquency.

_____ LEVEL 2: Limited Gang Activity: Gangs near your community; sporadic gang crimes & graffiti//limited gang intrusion//general indifference & denial//community passive, "let others respond".

_____ LEVEL 3: Emerging Gang Activity: One or more gangs in the area//local schools & parks are hangouts//loss of community identity & pride//limited short-term counter measures//increase in gang crimes.

_____ LEVEL 4: Community In Crisis: Major gang activity & drive-by's//parks & schools dominated by gangs//community living in fear//increase in truancy, dropouts and crime//Police overburdened.

_____ LEVEL 5: Gang Controlled Community: Gangs dominate most of daily life//tax base eroded & businesses flee//an "illegal" economy thrives//general breakdown of family & community//Institutional response to gangs overwhelmed.

68. Are all of your officers involved with gang awareness activities?

_____ YES _____ NO

69. Do your officers attempt to interact with juveniles using tribal customs or beliefs?

_____ YES _____ NO

69a. If so, how have the juveniles reacted to the officer's encounters when tribal customs and/or beliefs have been used?

_____ Favorably
 _____ No difference
 _____ With hostility
 Other: _____

70. Do you have a Tribal Code/laws that specifically address gang criminal activities? _____ YES _____ NO

70a. If so, what areas do these codes address?

71. Does your agency utilize computer databases for tracking gang members and gang activities? ☐ YES ☐ NO

72. Are you allowed to take photos of suspected gang members when they are on the street "hanging out"? ☐ YES ☐ NO

72a. Do you have policies in place as far as the maintenance of gang "files"/databases? ☐ YES ☐ NO

72b. Have your officers been trained with respect to limitations of what can or cannot be done when gathering intelligence on gang members/activities?
☐ YES ☐ NO

73. Is your Tribal Council supportive of your efforts towards gangs (whether it be prevention or suppression or both)? ☐ YES ☐ NO

74. Is there a concerted effort by your law enforcement agency to work with (and educate) the Tribal Council to bring about changes in policies and/or laws with respect to gangs on the reservation? ☐ YES ☐ NO

75. Do the Social Service agencies on the reservation work with your law enforcement agency in crime prevention efforts with "at-risk" youths?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76. If your reservation is not experiencing gang problems, do you think it is because of:

76a. The location of the reservation (far away or isolated from urban influence)?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76b. Due to efforts by your law enforcement agency?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76c. Due to a strong sense of community?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76d. Due to the size of the reservation?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76e. Due to economic support from casino(s)?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76f. Due to a strong stand taken by law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, etc.
☐ YES ☐ NO

76g. Due to strong parental involvement in their kids lives?
☐ YES ☐ NO

76h. Please list any other reason not listed above:

77. Are the elders on the reservation involved in any prevention efforts with the "at-risk" juveniles as a means of keeping them out of the gangs or away from crime? _____YES _____NO

77a. If so, in what ways?

77b. Do you feel that this involvement might be keeping gang activity away from your reservation? _____YES _____NO

78. If the reservation you police is experiencing gang problems, in your opinion, what would it take to help your agency and community turn this situation around?

- Please feel free to add any additional information that you feel will be helpful to this study
- Thank you for your participation in this study!

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

APPLIED IMAGE, Inc
1653 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609 USA
Phone: 716/482-0300
Fax: 716/288-5989

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