5-1991

The Evolution and Persistence of Gangs in America

Merry Beth Sheets

Follow this and additional works at: http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/uhp_theses

THE EVOLUTION AND PERSISTENCE OF GANGS IN AMERICA

Merry Beth Sheets

Honors Thesis

Dr. Williams

4/29/91

Street gangs and in particular youth gangs have been in existence in our society for nearly two centuries (Fagan, 1989). The research on this subject has been quite extensive, yet somewhat problematic. For example, a widely accepted definition of what constitutes a gang or gang behaviors and/or crimes remains elusive. It seems as though there are as many different definitions as there are scholars studying the phenomenon. Frederic Thrasher, for instance, defines a gang as "an interstitial group originally formed spontaneously and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning" (Siegel & Senna, 1991, 282).

Malcolm Klein and Walter Miller focus on youth gangs specifically and look at them as "any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in their neighborhood; b) recognize themselves as a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name); and c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to residents and/or enforcement agencies" and as "a self-formed association of peers, bound together by mutual interests, with identifiable leadership, well developed lines of authority, and other organizational features, who act in concert to achieve a specific purpose or purposes that generally include the conduct of illegal activity and control over a particular territory, facility or type of enterprise", respectively (282). It is apparent that these definitions differ considerably, which poses a problem in that consistency among research studies may be quite

1

lacking due to the absence of a common acceptance of what a gang and gang behaviors really are.

In addition to the multitude of conceptualizations of gangs, there are equally as many theories that attempt to explain the formation and maintenance of street gangs. Morash (1983) points out that Shaw & McKay, in their writings about the slums of Chicago in the early 1900's, were the first to really point the finger at gangs as a cause of delinquency. She asserts that their cultural deviance perspective hypothesized that juveniles who participated in gangs passed along "traditions of delinquency" which increased delinquency rates in these areas (310). According to Morash, Miller expanded on this theory and further implicated gangs as having a direct influence on delinquency. He concluded that "in the lower classes, there is stress on gang membership as an affirmation of masculinity in areas where female-headed households predominate" (310). Further, she quoted him as saying a "gang's typical value orientations...lead members to break the law" (310).

The strain theorists that surfaced in the 1950's and 60's have yet another view. Cohen's reaction formation hypothesis, as stated in Short and Strodtbeck's work on group process and gang delinquency, claims there is a reaction formation among lower class youths "against the standards of middle class society" (53). Cohen, according to Short and Strodtbeck, believed that youths came together in groups based on their common problem of status frustration and that the solution to this problem, i.e. total repudiation of middle class standards, could only come about in the context of the group (Short & Strodtbeck, 1965).

Short and Strodtbeck also point to the alternative theories of

2

Cloward and Ohlin who believed delinquency was most prevalent among those youths who were unconcerned with obtaining membership in the middle class, yet did desire an amelioration of their own economic position. Thus, "when legitimate avenues of opportunity were blocked,...delinquent subcultures of different types emerged according to the pattern of illegitimate opportunities locally available" (56). These theorists each looked toward a different set of variables as the primary culprit in fostering gangs. Accordingly, given the absence of a clear cut definition of the gang phenomenon or one irrefutable theory linking one variable to the cause of all gangs, no comprehensive, tried and true treatment methodology has been possible.

This absence of a successful program has contributed to the persistence of the gang problem in our society. Vigil (1988), asserts, in fact, that gangs have existed, particularly in urban areas, as far back as the turn of the century. This period was characterized by massive immigration coupled with industrialization, which led to a tremendous growth in urban populations and social instability which spawned the gang problem. Thrasher (1927) outlined a "situation complex" present in these developing areas in which "inadequate family life, poverty, deteriorating neighborhoods and ineffective religion, education and recreation" were prevalent (339). He believed these factors were simply part of the overall adjustments that immigrants had to make and formed what he termed the "matrix of gang delinquency" (339). Vigil (1988) also attributed gang formation to these problems, as well as "first and second generational conflict within each ethnic group...and a noted predisposition among youth

3

to gravitate toward street peers for sources of social associations and personal fulfillment" (4). Both of these scholars attributed gang formation to the many problems associated with cultural adaptations alluding to the considerable gang development that took place during this time period.

Gang lifestyles simply did not disappear, however, with the increased assimilation of the immigrant population. It follows then that many more factors must have been in place to contribute to the perpetuation of the gang. For instance, according to Vigil, there is much acceptance among writers that gangs are primarily an urban problem and gang members are particularly over-representative of the lower class. It could, therefore, be hypothesized that gang formation occurs almost exclusively in urban, low class neighborhoods regardless of the ethnic background of the population. Vigil's findings from his study of Chicano gangs in the barrios of Los Angeles tend to support this notion of a relationship between poverty and involvement in gangs. He found that the youths most likely to be intensively involved in a gang were those who belonged to the underclass which developed from the poorest families with the most limited opportunities for upward social mobility. These youth were from families with a much more stressful atmosphere than most barrio families, thus they took to the streets to escape from such an environment. They then formed groups and engaged in delinquent activity, such as theft for survival and vandalism for amusement (Vigil, 1988).

Thrasher (1927), too, focused his theory of gang development and maintenance on the phenomenon present in low class, urban areas. In these areas, he observed vast numbers of children in

4

somewhat limited space. Among these ever present children, "spontaneous play groups formed everywhere" (23). This environment was quite conducive to many occasions of conflict among the groups stemming from quarrels over territory, etc. with outsiders, as well as conflict with conventional society over their activities. According to Thrasher, this created "a real struggle for existence with other gangs and with the antagonistic forces in its wider social environment", which then bonded the group and "started the process of ganging so characteristic of the life of these unorganized areas" (23-24).

The perspective of the strain theorists also supports this notion. For example, Short and Strodtbeck (1965), allude to the belief held by strain theorists that the goals of the non-delinquent society are well conveyed to the members of the lower class; however, they somehow fail to achieve these goals. Further, this failure begins very early in life. This is due, they believe, to the social structure which "places severe limitations on the realization of cultural universals, such as the high value placed on material wealth and status achievement in important institutional contexts as school and the world of work" which is perpetuated by "the defective socialization skills of the parents in terms of preparing children to meet the achievement criteria of the larger society" (Short and Strodtbeck, 1965, 271). In sum, these lower class youths share the goals of legitimate society, but they simply were not properly socialized on how to attain these goals through participation in legitimate institutions. As a result, peer groups formed and the participation and subsequent belonging associated with these

groups, Short and Strodtbeck believe, provided some compensation for this societal failure.

More recent research in this area, however, has tended to call into question the validity of strain theory. Agnew (1984) outlines two major criticisms against strain theory and suggests a revision of the theory which, he asserts, overcomes these criticisms. As pointed out above, strain theorists generally assert that gang delinquency occurs mainly among the lower class. Recent data, however, call this into serious question. There is fantastic .evidence, in fact, that delinquency is very common among the middle class and that many types of delinquency, such as gang delinquency, are equally prevalent in all classes. Additionally, a fundamental principle of strain theory is that delinquency results due to the lack of legitimate means through which adolescents can obtain conventional goals. If this theory were correct, it would follow that delinquency rates would "be the greatest when aspirations were high and expectations were low" (152). Most of the studies conducted which focused mainly on school and work goals, however, have not tended to support this hypothesis. In fact, "...these studies have found that delinquency is highest when both aspirations and expectations are low, and delinquency is lowest when both aspirations and expectations are high" (152).

In an attempt to combat these criticisms, Agnew provides a variance on the traditional strain theory based on pain-avoidance behavior. He asserts that when adolescents are forced, as they often are by law, to remain in aversive situations, frustration results. This often may lead to illegal attempts to escape from such an environment, such as running away from home, truancy from

6

school, etc, or anger based delinquency, such as vandalism or violence. This theory does provide an explanation for incidents of delinquency in the middle class, as well as the lower class in that middle and lower class adolescents certainly may be experiencing aversive situations from which they cannot escape, thus overcoming the first criticism. The second criticism does not apply to this revised theory because it is not based on the premise that delinquency results from not being able to obtain goals through legitimate means (Agnew, 1984).

Furthermore, Agnew believes his theory can be extended to explain delinquency between groups based on the fact that groups vary in terms of the aversions they face and the legal means available to escape them. In relation to gangs then, these groups may be forming in response to painful situations they may be trying to avoid, such as aversive family situations, ruthless neighborhoods, etc. These adolescents turn to illegal avenues, i.e. the delinquent gang group, to decrease the pain they are experiencing in their environment.

The group formation alluded to above that is so characteristic of the various strain theories leads to another possible explanation of the perpetuation of delinquent gangs – the group process perspective. Marvin Shaw (1976) defines group formation as "the establishment of a relationship between two or more persons" (82). Entering into such a relationship is generally believed by group process theorists to be voluntary and based upon some need, such as affiliation or working toward a common goal (Shaw, 1976). When focusing on delinquency, these theorists allude to a feeling of belonging as a very significant factor for many youths in their

7

decision to join a delinquent gang, as these children often come
from broken homes lacking any sense of belonging whatsoever.
Common goals among these youth are also instrumental in their
affiliation with gangs.

In support of this, Short and Strodtbeck (1965) allude to
Jansyn's study conducted as a detached worker in which he found
that delinquent acts, conducted both by the group as a whole and on
an individual basis, served mainly to protect and increase the
solidarity of the group. The protection desired by the group would
seem to be from the community at large as Short and Strodtbeck
focus more on a community-group interaction perspective of the
group process. They believe that "for delinquency theory...it is
particularly important to link peer-group process and community
relations as it is these group-community interactions which impart
to delinquent behavior so much of its apparently ad hoc character"
(270). They seem to be linking the spontaneous, situationally
specific delinquent acts of the gang to the conflictual nature of
their relationship with the community. Perhaps the negative
attitude directed toward these youth street groups from the
surrounding community creates resentment within these groups. This
thread of resentment creates a bond and provides a common goal
among the members of the groups to act out against the particular
community.

In addition to this group-community interaction, which is
believed to foster delinquent acts in specific communities,
community tolerance of gang behaviors may also contribute to the
maintenance of gangs. Ruth Horowitz's study of a Chicago Chicano
community is illustrative of this. She focused on the distinction,

8

as alluded to by Lofland, between positive and negative tolerance. She asserts that "positive tolerance involves the ability to maintain a relationship with another in open awareness...of their personal or behavioral differences" and that "negative tolerance is the ability to put up with another's differences or potentially problematic conduct simply because of lack of awareness..." (Horowitz, 1987, 437). She found both types of tolerance present in this community, and that both positive and negative tolerance of gang violence was in direct response to the importance these Chicanos placed on the defense and maintenance of one's honor.

For example, non-gang youth exhibited their positive toleration of gang fights by expressing their understanding of the gang member's motivation and accepting the aggression as proper when done in defense of a member's honor. In fact, the youth not affiliated with gangs would often also fight in defense of their own honor; however, they would not generally challenge others or fight to establish their own reputation.

An example of negative tolerance can be found within the interaction between gang members and their family. In general, parents do not support gang membership of their children or their participation in violent acts. However, they do accept violence as an appropriate response to a threat to their child's honor and believe it is acceptable, even to a deadly degree, to defend family honor. In addition, Chicano youth do not reject adult authority and, therefore, often behave exemplary at home and at family functions. They also believe violence and inappropriate behavior, such as drunkenness, should not occur in the home. This presentation of a good boy to the parents coupled with the lack of

direct observation of violence by the parents, allows them to be oblivious to their child's street behavior and, thus, maintain the negative toleration. Not all parents remain unaware of their child's affiliation with a gang, but "the generally held expectation that sons grow out of gang membership helps parents remain tolerant" (Horowitz, 1987, 444).

Occasions do arise, however, whereby the social arrangements permitting this tolerance by the family do breakdown, such as gang violence at weddings or parties. Parents can no longer ignore their son's gang affiliation if he becomes directly involved in the confrontation. Moreover, they become very upset and confused following such events and are unaware of how to re-negotiate the boundaries of the parent/child relationship in regards to home life and their child's life on the streets. Trying to closely monitor their son's behavior and placing restrictions on him, however, goes against the Chicano's definition of honor. An honorable man is believed to be an independent one; therefore, parents refrain from interference, which allows gang membership to continue.

Numerous intervention plans have been implemented in various communities over the last several decades in an attempt to reduce such gang related violence, as well as prevent gang formation altogether. Thrasher (1927) alluded to a treatment methodology based on the delinquent as an individual and in relation to the various group affiliations influencing his particular actions, such as the family, the neighborhood, the school, the church and the gang. He believed the gang played an instrumental role in the development of delinquent personality characteristics and attitudes. The gang group, in addition, often became the

predominant group in the boy's life with his status in the gang his sole concern. It was this strong relation between the boy and the gang that Thrasher believed "became the paramount issue with which the official agencies must deal if they were to achieve any measure of success in handling the boy" (Trasher, 1927, 346).

Thrasher, through his experience, believed there were only really two ways in which to reform a youth influenced by the gang - remove the boy from the social environment of the gang or reform the gang as a whole. The former was usually done in the form of institutionalization where attempts were made to remodel the child so he did not return to delinquent behaviors upon release. Moving the family entirely from the environment had also been employed at the time of Thrasher's writing, but without success. Due to limits on the family's financial means, this usually resulted in the family relocating into another gang dominated area in which the child quickly found a new group.

Reformation of the gang as a whole during this time period generally consisted of redirecting the group's activity from those of a delinquent nature to more sound, legal ones. An example of this was the transformation of a delinquent gang entitled the "Holy Terrors" into a boy scout group with such transformation being facilitated by the owner of a business frequently vandalized by the group (352). While these programs of redirecting the gang's energy into legitimate tasks seemed to work in a few instances, the results of the Boy's Club Study conducted from 1927 to 1935 found that they had little effect on overall delinquency rates. The programs did not reach a large amount of boys, nor did they focus, particularly, on individuals who were known to be delinquent

(Thrasher, 1927, 351-355).

Another method is outlined in Spergel's publication of 1966,
in which he provided a detailed design of a detached worker
program. This was the dominant method of gang reformation employed
throughout the 50's and 60's. In his analysis, he discussed
factors that may create gang delinquency and methods to prevent,
treat and control this behavior. He did not attempt to provide
specific instructions for solutions to gang related problems, but
merely "to present principles and delineate guidelines for
.acceptable performance" by the street worker (Spergel, 1966, 8).

First of all, Spergel proposed the following definition of a
detached worker: "the systematic effort of an agency worker,
through social work or treatment techniques within the neighborhood
context, to help a group of young people who were described as
delinquent or partially delinquent to achieve a conventional
adaptation" (22). In order to accomplish such tasks, the detached
worker had to be fully cognizant of the pattern of the specific
group with which they would be dealing, as well as their particular
problems and have in mind specific potential solutions to these
problems. In addition, a purpose to the advocate's presence had to
be outlined. It was this purpose that would ultimately determine
the methodology to be employed.

For example, if the purpose of the project was to control the
gang, a complete saturation by street workers in high conflict
areas inhabited primarily by the more seriously delinquent groups
would be implemented. "Surveillance and authority management were
extensively developed and the worker assisted and collaborated
with other organizations and community groups to exercise control

12

over the behavior of gang members" (23). This type of program philosophy Spergel termed the area agency.

In contrast, the focus of the treatment agency is to treat and rehabilitate gang members. This program was centered around delinquents with "psychological disturbances or interpersonal difficulties...and treatment emphasized verbal communication, permissiveness, release of feeling, anxiety reduction and creation of more effective personal control systems" (24). Although Spergel readily admitted that no empirical evidence existed at that time -either to support or refute the competency of the detached worker program, he did hypothesize that this bridging of the gap between conventional society and these alienated delinquent populations "had extraordinary potential to resolve many of man's most distressing social problems" (225).

A study conducted by Irving Spergel much later did provide some evidence of success by the street worker. A pilot project entitled Crises Intervention Services Project (CRISP) was initiated, in part, by Mr. Spergel and implemented in a very violent community in Chicago with the goal of merely reducing gang violence. While Spergel readily admitted that similar programs implemented in the 1950's and 1960's were generally found to have no positive effect on gang delinquency, he argued that the methodology employed in the CRISP study differed greatly from those of the traditional detached worker programs (Spergel, 1986). Graduate students and local community workers were employed as the on scene workers and were primarily responsible for implementing all aspects of the CRISP strategy.

The CRISP strategy consisted of four components:

crisis intervention and mediation with gangs of
youths and young adults on the streets; intensive
work with individual gang youth, aged fourteen to
sixteen, referred by Youth Division, Chicago Police
Department; mobilization of local neighborhood
groups to deal with the problem; and development
of an advisory group with broad local and citywide
participation to oversee the project, facilitate
interagency communications, and stimulate
continuity and expansion of the model should it
prove successful. Priorities of staff time varied,
with about 70 percent of staff effort allocated to
the crisis-intervention component and about 10
percent to each of the remaining components (Spergel,
1986, 97).

A comparison was then made of violent incident rates both
before this strategy was in place and eight months following its
implementation. Spergel found that "there was a significant
reduction in the rate of increase in...the more violent gang
crimes..."; however, "there was little difference in the patterns
of increase in...less serious gang crimes" (112). His findings
indicated that a street worker program focusing 70 percent of its'
effort on crisis intervention did have a positive effect on
decreasing serious gang related violence. Such violence does tend
to be a crisis situation; therefore, one could conclude that the
project was quite successful in the area where it focused most of
its attention, i.e. crisis intervention. However, the data also
suggested that while gang crimes did decrease, non-gang crimes
slightly increased in the areas served by the program and
specifically, violent, non-gang crime increased slightly.
Additionally, absolutely no evidence was found that indicated a
general reduction in the level of delinquency of gang offenders
(Spergel, 1986, 126-127).

One additional method that has been routinely applied in an
attempt to combat gang delinquency is the preventive intervention

14

technique. This strategy can take various forms, one of which is outlined in David Thompson and Leonard Jason's study conducted on Chicago's north side. Their study was based on a project known as BUILD (Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development) which was targeted at youth at high risk for becoming a gang member. This program was based on social development theory and had as its main purpose "involving these high risk youth in alternative activities designed to divert them from gang membership" (Thompson & Jason, 1988, 326). This basic premise is quite similar to that of the gang reformation technique outlined in Thrasher's work; however, the methodology employed was significantly more sophisticated and the program focused on pre-gang youth.

In this quasi-experimental design, youth were either assigned to classroom sessions in which the negative aspects of gang life were highly emphasized, as well as the positive aspects of a gang-free life, or they were assigned to these classroom sessions in combination with supervised after-school activities. A control group was also utilized in which no intervention was employed. (Thompson & Jason, 1988). Following the intervention period, "youth's names were compared with gang membership rosters obtained from informants" (323).

While none of the participants were involved in a gang prior to the study, the numbers that did join following the intervention (4 in the control group, 1 in the experimental) were not statistically significant (Thompson & Jason, 1988). In fact, the only conclusion these researchers were able to draw from this study was that a trend may exist whereby "targeted youth who did not participate in either the classroom sessions or the after-school

15

program may have been more likely to join street gangs than youth who participated in the programs" (330). This absence of a clear cause-effect relationship between the programs utilized in this area and youth participation in gangs draws into question the effectiveness of the project.

Factors did exist relative to each of these programs discussed that contributed to their failure. The institutionalization of youth in the 1920's in an attempt to rehabilitate them was an unmitigated failure. These youth were placed in artificial environments without the stresses and strains of the streets influencing their decisions. So, when they did return to the streets, they also returned to the delinquent behaviors they were practicing prior to admission. In addition, these youth often played the good boy role simply to facilitate their early release and subsequent return to the streets and their friends, i.e. fellow gang members. As previously mentioned, the reformation of the gang as a whole during this same time period by redirecting the group's energy into legitimate tasks did not work either, mainly because community involvement was not substantial enough to have any real effect.

The detached worker program implemented by Spergel and reported on in his 1986 publication was lacking in many areas. First of all, this project was limited to one neighborhood in Chicago; therefore, the question arises whether the results can be generalized to a larger population. In addition, the University of Chicago sponsored the program, but only on a temporary basis. The expectation that the community or a local agency would continue the sponsorship did not come to pass. Therefore, funds were limited

16

and certain areas of the project suffered. As Spergel stated himself, "it was a brief demonstration, with a limited research an evaluation component" (97). Due to the lack of funding, part-time staff were used. This placed limitations on the comprehensiveness and intensity of the program.

Finally, the BUILD project, evaluated by Thompson and Jason, was wrought with many methodological problems. A very low number of the targeted youth joined street gangs throughout the course of the project, including those in the control group. This would seem to indicate that inaccurate procedures to identify youth truly at risk for gang membership were employed. In addition, the sample may have been biased in that the assignments to the experimental conditions were not random. Finally, participation in the program was completely voluntary, but motivational differences were not controlled.

It is quite clear from this brief review of prior attempts to curb delinquency and their subsequent failure, that this goal has yet to be met and definitively proven. Thrasher's philosophies and proposed strategies for combatting gang delinquency were merely in their infancy and had yet to be tested; however, even subsequent scientific studies have failed to provide a clear cut solution to this problem. Perhaps this is a mere reflection of the various methodological difficulties inherent in the study of gangs, as evidenced by Thompson and Jason's study. Perhaps it is due to the lack of a common definition of what constitutes gang behavior in the minds of researchers, agencies and, in particular, police departments. Given that the majority of data relative to gang activities and membership are provided by the police, the

17

statistics greatly lack accuracy as classification techniques of

gang crimes vary tremendously. Further, the most reliable

information can only be obtained through direct contact with gang

members and these delinquent youth may not be willing to provide

accurate information.

Or, perhaps the failure of the aforementioned programs can be

attributed to the lack of a sound, comprehensive social policy

throughout our communities. Often, as pointed out by Huff (1989),

cities deal with their gang problem by not acknowledging such

problems even exist. These cities are operating out of "official

denial" primarily to protect their image and, according to Huff,

"this political paralysis appears to encourage gang related

assaults and may send the wrong signals to gang members, implying

that they can operate with impunity..." (Huff, 1989, 530-531). He

calls for cities to wake up and take the responsibility so

deficient in our society.

The policy recommendations he proposes call for an

interagency cooperative approach. He believes schools should

implement ethics and values into the classroom context, teachers

should receive assertiveness training (as gang assaults seem to

occur primarily on those teachers seen as weak), intergovernmental

task forces on gangs should be established, local task forces

consisting of juvenile bureaus, juvenile court, outreach programs,

etc. should be put into effect, police should continue to be

aggressive, yet remain professional in their dealings with gang

members, urban communities need to reestablish quality centers and

programs, etc. (Huff, 1989, 533-535).

In a similar vein, Spergel (1984) believes "the key goal of

social intervention is improved organization of the local community" (220). He hypothesizes that "if the community is more effectively organized, including the presence of adequate social control and social service provision, the violent gang as a transitional institution may no longer be necessary" (21). He proposes that this community organization can be achieved through the implementation of mechanisms that will provide a link between conventional society and young adults, systematized police strategies and the establishment of youth agencies. These all-embracing approaches serve to provide positive interactions between the gang member and many aspects of his social life outside of the gang.

I agree wholeheartedly with Huff and Spergel's assertion that cooperation among community agencies is essential; however, I would propose a much more radical alteration of our current social policy and on a much greater scale. A change must occur in the priorities of the politicians of this country. We, as a nation, must decide to take responsibility for the problems we are facing and stop taking responsibility for the problems of other nations. A solid commitment to wage an all out war on the virtually out of control gangs in this country, backed up by very sufficient funding, would potentially yield excellent results. Monies should be provided to hire experts to conduct the research needed to study the problem and propose and implement proper, comprehensive solutions. This use of sociological experts would reduce the methodological errors seen in past programs. In addition, appropriations should be made to allow the implementation of wide spread programs where they would be needed most and competitive salaries should be available

to attract social workers and others in the field to work the programs.

If we can "reaffirm the importance of our neighborhoods by putting in place a number of programs that offer hope, education, and job skills...", we can possibly improve the quality of life of our youth that seems to be so rapidly deteriorating (Huff, 1989, 536). It would seem that the implementation of a program focusing only on one area, or with only one strategy is insufficient to combat the very complex problem of gang maintenance and formation. Comprehensive policy considerations need to be established and cooperation between all agencies touching the juvenile's life needs to occur. But, none of this would be possible without the financial support of the United States Government. Perhaps if everyone joins in the fight, and puts some money where there mouths are, the goal of our youth leading gang-free lives can be realized.

CITATIONS

Agnew, Robert (1985, September). A Revised Strain Theory of Delinquency. Social Forces. 64. 151-167.

Davis, James R. (1982). Street Gangs: Youth, Biker and Prison Groups, Kendell/Hunt Publishing Company.

Horowitz, Ruth (1987, December). Community Tolerance of Gang Violence. Social Problems. 34. 437-450.

Huff, Ronald C. (1989, October). Youth Gangs and Public Policy. Crime and Delinquency. 35. 524-537.

Morash, Merry (1983, October). Gangs, Groups and Delinquency. The British Journal of Criminology. 23. 309-335.

Shaw, Marvin E. (1976). Group Dynamics: The Psychology of Small Group Behavior, McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Short, James F. & Strodtbeck, Fred L. (1965). Group Process and Gang Delinquency, The University of Chicago Press.

Siegel, Larry J. & Senna, Joseph J (1991). Juvenile Delinquency Theory Practice & Law, West Publishing Company.

Spergel, Irving (1966). Street Gang Work: Theory and Practice, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.

Spergel, Irving A. (1984, June). Violent Gangs in Chicago: In Search of Social Policy. Social Service Review. 58. 199-226.

Spergel, Irving A. (2986, March). The Violent Gang Problem in Chicago: A Local Community Approach. Social Service Review. 60. 94-131.

Steiner, Ivan D. (1972). Group Process And Productivity, Academic Press, Inc.

Thompson, David W. & Jason, Leonard A. (1988, September). Street Gangs and Preventive Interventions. Criminal Justice and Behavior. 15. 323-333.

Thrasher, Frederic Milton (1963). The Gang. The University of Chicago Press.

Vigil, James Diego (1988). Barrio Gangs. The University of Texas Press.