

Timeline of gangs in america



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Gangs started out as a way for people who were socially distinct to come together as a unit; most consisted of people who were of the same ethnic background, unfortunately crime was a way for these groups of people to even the odds. One of the first gangs recorded was in 1820 in New York and through time gangs have become most predominant in four areas; New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Mexico. Forty Thieves Gang and their leader, Edward Coleman, as long as met your quota on stolen goods you remained in the gang.

Edward led this gang from 1820 to 1838 where he was hung after being convicted of killing his wife. The gang started in a grocery store owned by Rosanna Peers (Beware the Forty Thieves, very first gang of New York, 2009). These grocery stores were known for selling cheap liquor and groceries often with bars in the back. The cheap liquor sold by Rosanna attracted these mostly Irish immigrant pick pockets and thugs to form this gang. By the 1850s and the growing feeling of being second class citizens other gangs such as the Chichesters, the Dead Rabbits and the Bowery Boys were also formed in the streets of New York; by this time gangs became more notorious for wreaking havoc, having gang wars with public displays of violence (Gang Story). The Chichesters and the Dead Rabbits banded together against their rival gang the Bowery Boys; both the Dead Rabbits and the Bowery Boys were political clubs that met to promote their own which often resulted in fighting (Chamberlain, 2003).

The Chichesters who became part of the Whyos were a gang that dominated the streets from the 1860s until the 1890s. Danny Lyons and Danny Driscoll were the longest reigning leaders of the gang, who used many

locations for their meets but their favorite was a bar known as The Morgue. Under the rule of Lyons and Driscoll the gang participated in everything including urder. Dandy John Dolan was one of the famous gang members that invented some of the weapons used by the gang, shoes with a blade in them and an eye gouger made of copper. Most of the gang members were convicted and executed including the leaders.

This gang remained dominant until the early 1890??? s where after an internal dispute they had a major gunfight; their territory was taken over by Tammany Hall??? s direction (Heldmen, 2010). Tammany Hall started out as a Noble Group of people who helped immigrants who arrived in New York City to find jobs and places to live also helping foreigners to become citizens. In 1860 William Tweed became the leader of the Tammany Club and swindled millions of dollars from the city of New York (Britannica). The club members looked to gangs to have their candidates win. Tweed used the gangs and his minions to bully the lower class people of New York and become really powerful but inevitably gang clashes would turn deadly. The next group of gangs that ruled in the very late 1890??? s and early 1900??? s consisted of gangs such as the Eastman Gang and their rivals the Five Points Gang.

The Eastman gang was started by Monk Eastman from the lower east side of Manhattan that was Jewish.?? Also readGang started out as simple burglars and later added more severe crimes such as murder for hire to their resume. The gang ran the territory of New York between Monroe Street to the East River; this gang also worked for Tweed and at its height had 1200 members. Eastman under the protection of the political influences of Tweed was

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immune from prosecution in the early 1900s. In 1904 Eastman was convicted on beating up someone and shooting off twelve shots at a private investigator where he received ten years and Max Zwerbach became the leader of the Eastman gang.

After the death of Max at the hands of the rival gang the Five Points, Big Jack Zelig became the new leader on 1911. The rivalry between the two groups continued and they battled for months until the death of Zelig, at which time Eastman was being released from prison and took over until he was sent back to jail. Eventually Sirocco and Tricker took over but the damage had already been done and the gang eventually disintegrated (American Organized Crime). The Rival gang of the Eastmans was known as the Five Points Gang and was headed by Paul Vaccarelli (aka Paul Kelly); the gang consisted mostly of Italian-American origin.

Kelly recruited Johnny Torrio, Al Capone and Lucky Luciano who became prominent criminals as adults. The Five Points gang changed the way that criminal groups operated within the United States. Torrio who was second in command later recruited Capone and went to Chicago to take over the streets there. Kelly survived the attempts on his life and under the request of Tammany Hall he kept a low profile until his death in 1936 (American Organized Crime).

In the early 1920s the first Los Angeles gangs started to form and growth of these gangs were stimulated by the zoot suit riots and the Sleepy Lagoon murder. Even up to today it is difficult to know the exact truth behind the murder of Sleepy Lagoon (SleepyLagoon.com). In the 1940s, the United

States was engaged in World War II, the city was full of the Japanese and the Latinos were growing weary, as with any group of younger folks they started to develop their own style of clothing and hairstyles, the style of suit they wore were called a zoot suit. They called themselves pachucos; the pachucos and the servicemen at first were civil to each other but these eventually turned to resentment and on June 3, 1943 servicemen said they were attacked by the pachucos.

The next evening a group of approximately 200 sailors took cabs into the city and beat up and strip the pachucos of their suits. The riot lasted for days and civilians joined in the fight, innocent bystanders and those not even wearing zoot suits were beat up, in all over 150 injuries had occurred with over 500 arrests. The military was no longer allowed in Los Angeles and the police and the press downplayed the incident by blaming the local Mexican youth for inciting the riot (Given Place Media, 2013). The 1950s to 1980s were a time when street gangs started becoming popular. African American gangs in Los Angeles started and were well established by the 1960s especially in low income housing areas.

By the 1980, the gang culture and crack cocaine were associated as the gangs were fighting over territories in the ghetto and to push the drugs on those that lived in these poor areas. The south did not see much gang activity until the 1970s and only Miami and San Antonio seemed to be the most troubled with gang activity. In New York, The Supreme Team was the African American gang that controlled the crack dealing as they instilled fear in any who tried to compete against them (Urban Dictionary, 2013). One of the best known gangs out of Los Angeles was founded by Raymond

Washington and Stanley Williams, they joined two rival gangs into a bigger unit and became known as the Crips; they are considered to be one of the largest most violent street gangs in the United States.

The membership today has approximately 65, 000 members double the amount from 30 years earlier. They are involved in drug trafficking, robbery, murder, extortion and other crimes. Their rival gangs are known as the Bloods were originally thought to be founded in the 1970s where the Pirus Street split from the Crips and became the Bloods. This gang came about approximately 3 years after the Crips.

The rival gang is involved in the same type of criminal activity as the Crips. Colors were used as a primary way to distinguish who was who, Bloods wore red and Crips wore blue; each gang also had a specific set of hand gestures and symbols to distinguish them (Walker, 2013). These gangs are all similar in wanting control of a certain territory it wasn't until the emergence of street gangs that drugs especially crack and was the main reason for wanting territorial control. The rivalry between the two has been evolving since the early 70s and because of the issues with illegal drug distribution; the government started to crack down and declared a war on drugs.

Gangs continue to grow and one of the most notorious Hispanic gangs is known as MS-13, membership is at approximately 70, 000 members and continues to grow. In addition to the crimes committed by the Blood and the Crips, MS-13 is also involved in prostitution and arms trafficking. MS-13 has become known as one of the most notorious street gangs in the Western

Hemisphere (InSight Crime). Since the Blood, Crips and MS-13 gangs growth from the 1970s and 1980s, gangs have changed, where the gang members use to be older like in the Mafia days, today the gangs are younger with many of them starting as early as 12, girls are also allowed to be gang members and the make-up of the gangs through the 1990s to today, it's all about the youth and getting them started younger and younger. There are reported 24, 500 active gangs in 2000.

Gangs are showing up in all areas and are 100 percent in areas with a population of over 250, 000 (Puzzanchera, 2002). Since the numbers in 2, 000, the gangs keep increasing to now over 33, 000 gangs and more than 1. 4 million members, based on numbers compiled by law enforcement agencies and the FBI, gangs committed a little less than half all the violent crimes reported. Gangs are becoming increasingly more dangerous than years past (Eric Goldschein, 2012).

The Sureno gangs in Los Angeles account for more than 50% of the gang population and account for more than 500 of the Hispanic gangs in Los Angeles, one of the most common is the 18th Street Gang, in addition to being the most common it is one of the fastest growing gangs in Los Angeles; the gang is now spread across 32 states and has infiltrated the military. The 18th Street Gang is one of the rival gangs of the MS-13 and has been feuding for the last twenty years (Urban Dictionary, 2013). With the Hispanic gangs being the most predominant, other ethnicities have also formed gangs, the Asian community has, one such gang is known as the Asian Boyz, white gangs such as the White Supremacist (mostly in prison) became a necessity to protect themselves from rival prison gangs. The other

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white gangs were the Hell's Angels (more like a bikers club) and they were a biker gang, while most gangs wanted to make a profit the Hell's Angels believed that whatever they made should help them to live the life they were accustomed too.

Although the Hell's Angels were ruthless they were not like street gangs. Gangs continue to be a way people who were socially distinct or needing a safe haven to come together. Gangs are a rival to other gangs in order to even the odds and keep the balance in their neighborhoods. Gangs have gone from offering protection to now trafficking drugs, prostitution, arms distribution, robbery, identity theft and murder, as times change so have the gangs and what they represent.

The statistics are staggering when you think of 1.4 million gang members and a little less than half the violent crime committed in the United States. Where gangs started in mostly populated poor areas they have now spread to all corners of the United States, the heavily populated areas being hit the hardest. References <http://www.businessinsider.com/13-american-gangs-keeping-the-fbi-up-at-night-2012-8?op=1> www.laalmanac.com/history/hi07t.htm www.insightcrime.org/groups-el-salvador/mara-salvatrucha-ms-13 www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/fs200202.pdf