Bad Girls, Bad Girls Watcha Gonna Do?

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- In San Antonio, Texas a 13 year old girl allegedly beat and then held down another girl while police say several boys sexually assaulted her.

- Females account for 1/3$^{rd}$ of all gang members (Moore, 1991).

- In New Orleans, a 16 year old girl pulled out a six-inch kitchen knife and plunged it into a classmate's back.

- A third grade girl took a .357 magnum to school to protect herself from a boy who was allegedly harassing her.

- On the streets of LA and NY, some girls carry small guns in their purses and razor blades in their mouths– just to protect themselves or find a victim.

- With 1/3rd of the western world's population, the USA accounts for 90% of the murders of girls and young women, 90% of the pregnancies among young adolescents aged 10-14, and 70% of the pregnancies among older adolescents aged 15-19 *(Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Carnegie Corp., 1996).*

# EVALUATION VOCABULARY

- Excellent, Exceptional, Quality, Engaging
- Marvelous, Astonishing, Magnificent
- Energizing, Entertaining, Knowledgeable
- Passionate, Sincere, Remarkable
- Insightful, Stimulating, Unostentatious
- Down To Earth......

# ...the number of female juveniles arrested for murder increased almost 19% between 1987 and 1996...
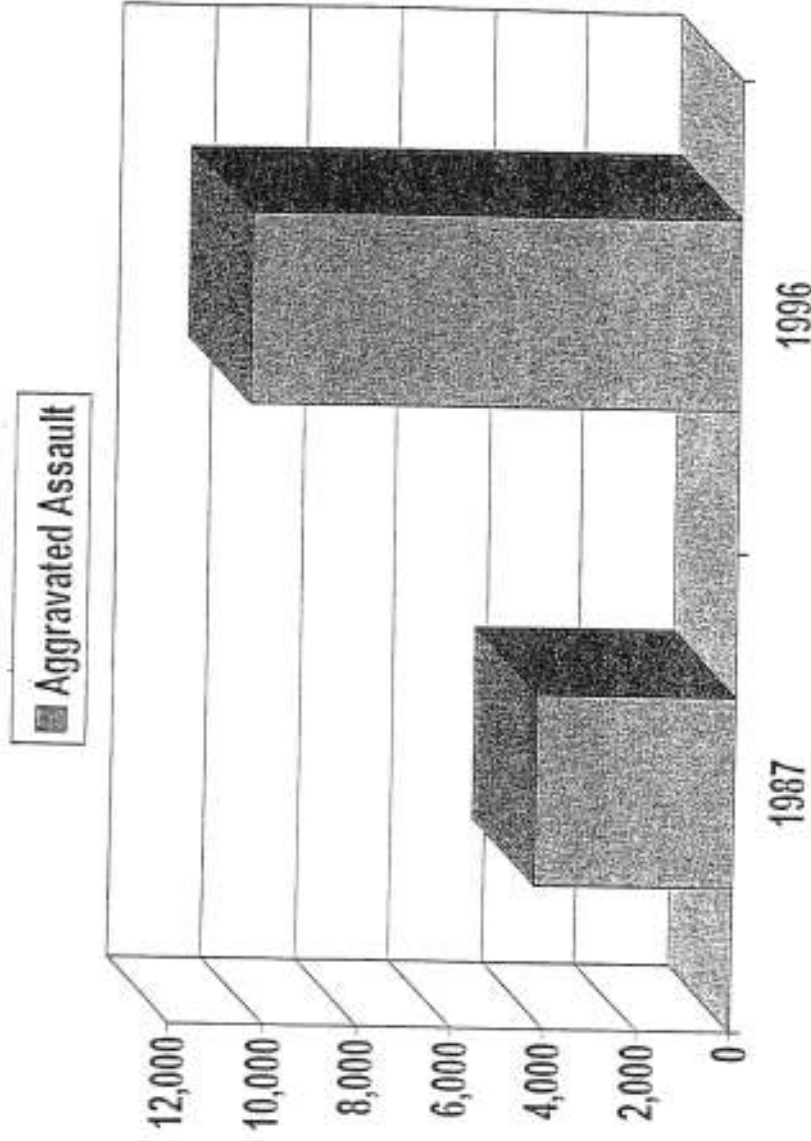
**Murder**
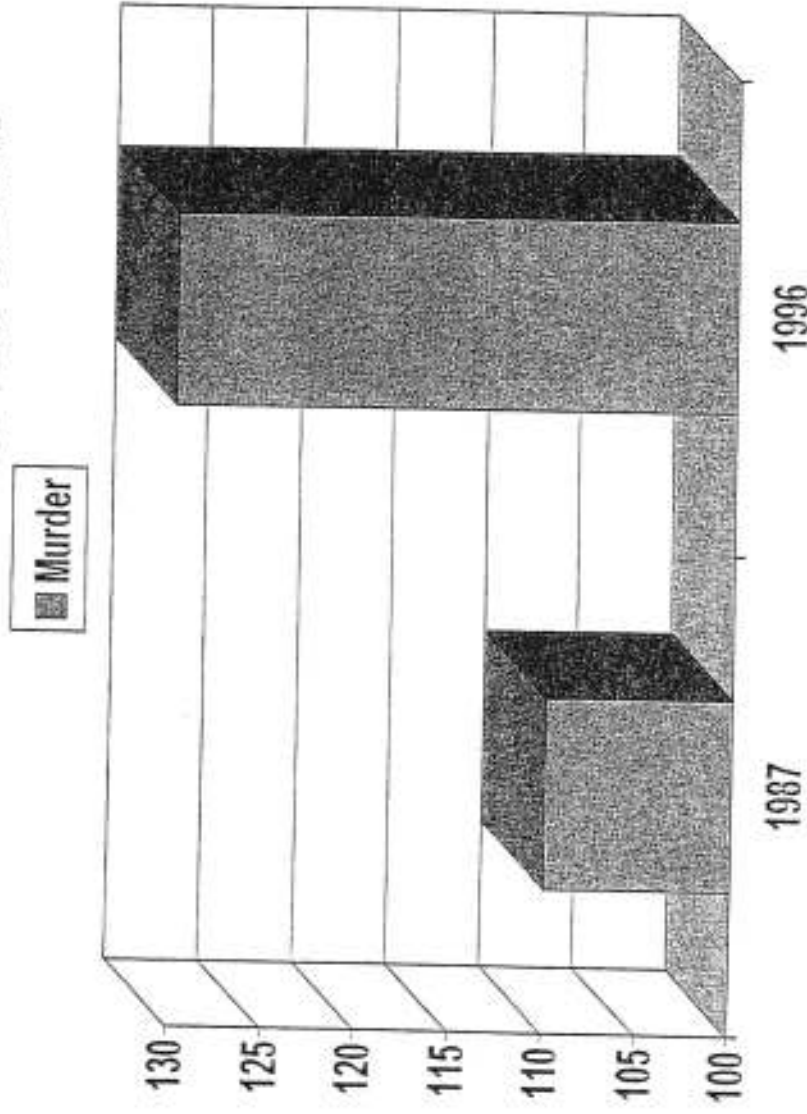
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Report

...between 1987 and 1996, robbery committed by females increased 117%...
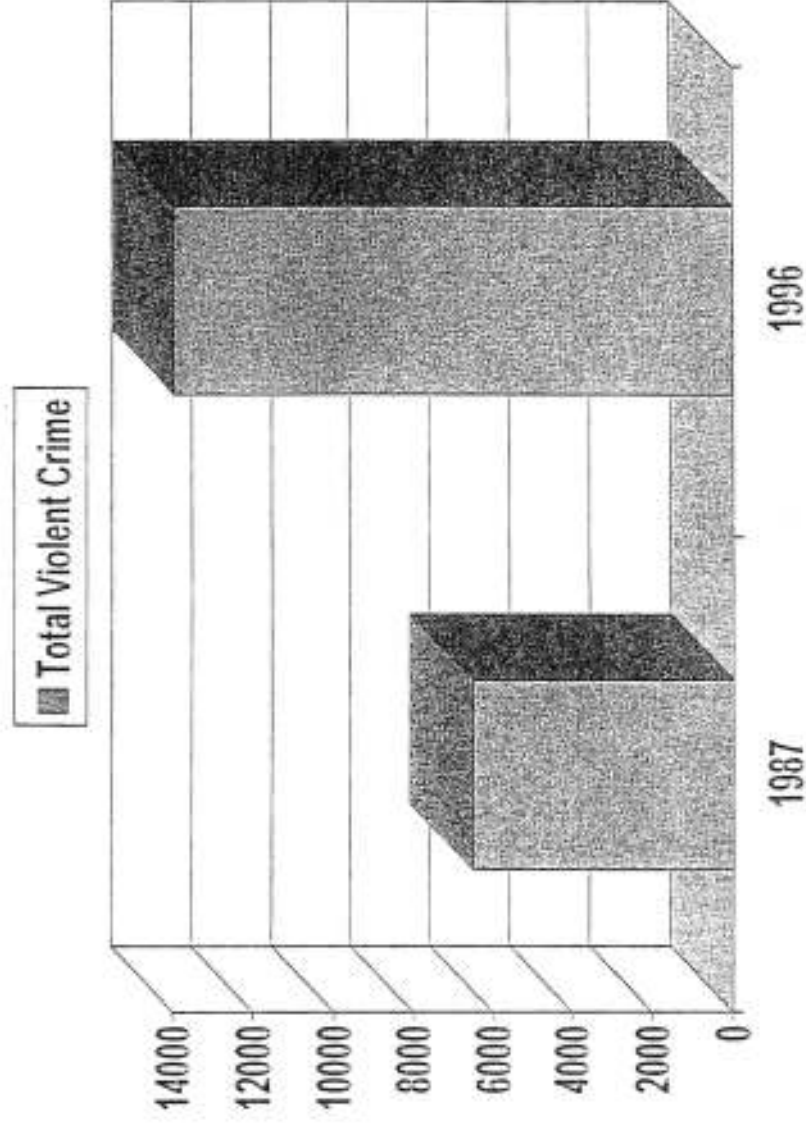


Robbery

3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0

1987    1996
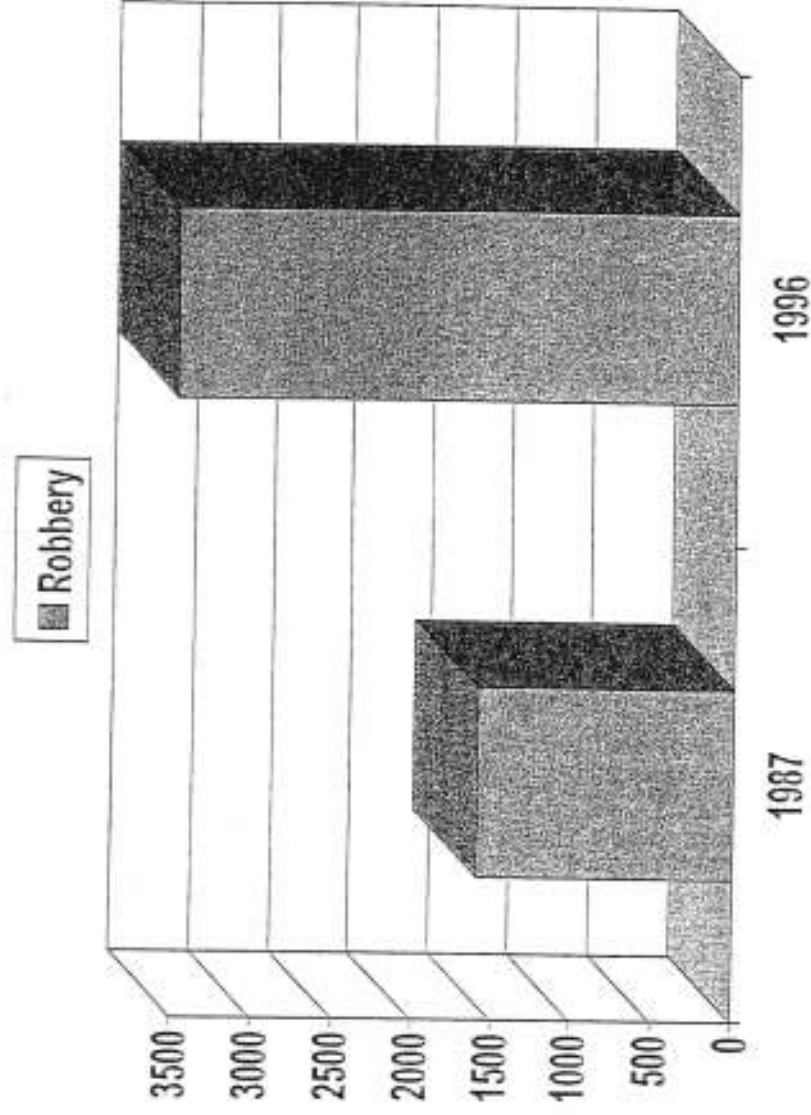
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Report

...the incident rate of aggravated assault commited by females increased 124%...

Aggravated Assault

...total crime arrests of juvenile females increased 118% between 1987 and 1996. In 1989, eight males were arrested for every female arrested. In 1997, the ratio was five to one...

...In the same time period, drug abuse violations by females have increased more than 121%



Drug Abuse Violations

20000
15000
10000
5000
0

1987    1996
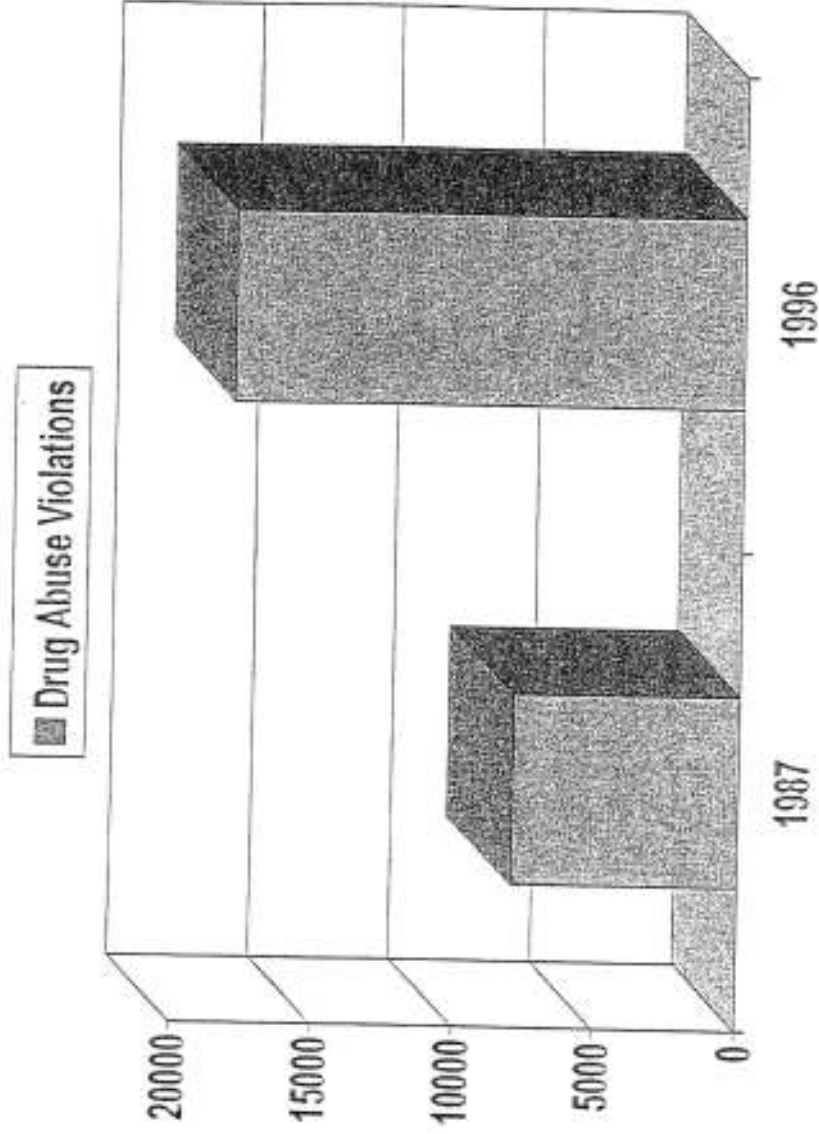
# WEAPONS OFFENSES
# Female Arrests
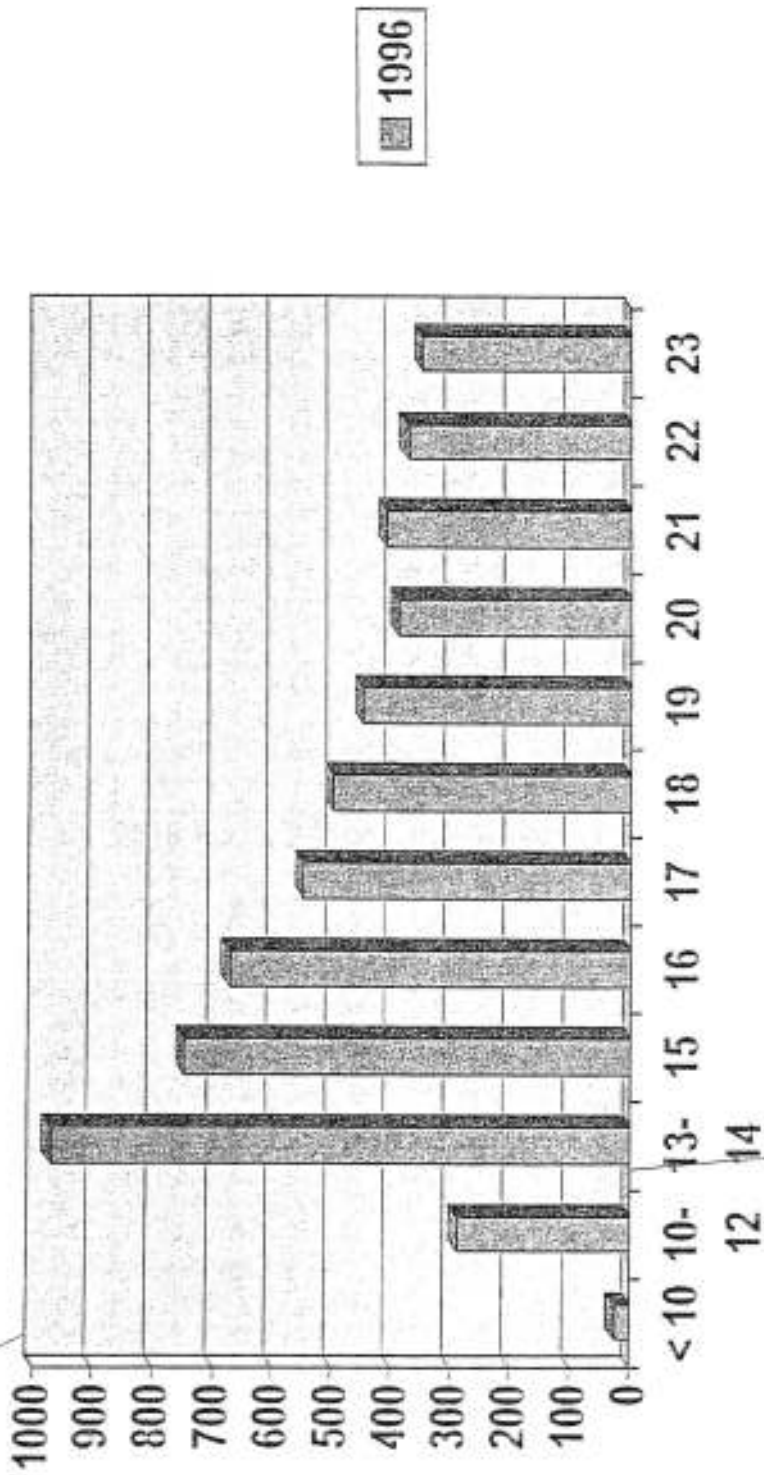
# Pressures Girls Face

- From Family- to not share feelings, be a lady.

- From Peers- drugs, how to act, how to think, who to like.

- Opposite Sex- to perform, to worship, to submit.

- From Society- media, community, cultural.

- From employers- sexual harassment.

- From School- to excel, to keep quiet.

# Styles of Aggression

| Boys | Girls |
|------|-------|
| "Sherman Tanks" | "Snipers in the night" |
| Externally Aggressive | Internally Aggressive |
| Fighting by Rules | What Rules? |
| Fast Resolution | Long-Term Grudges |

15

# African Proverb:
# It takes a whole village to raise a child..."

# DeLano's Proverb

Just don't forget, we're living in some messed up, dysfunctional villages!!!

# The Impact of the Media
# Music

- Gangster Rap
- Tex Mex Music
- Heavy Metal Alternative

# Impact of Media Advertising

- Commercials
- Ads

# The Impact of the Media
## Movies and Television

- Brady Bunch
- Soaps
- Game Shows
- Married With Children
- Malcolm In The Middle
- Simpsons
- Southpark

- Jerry Springer
- Howard Stern
- WWF
- Thelma & Louise
- Set It Off
- Jaw Breaker

# VOICES

- YOU MUST LISTEN TO THE VOICES

- YOUTH BRING BAGGAGE, LAUNDRY & ALL KINDS OF GARBAGE WITH THEM TO SCHOOL

- AND YOU WONDER WHY JOHNNY IS TIRED OR ANGRY THIS MORNING?

# DENIAL



It can't happen here
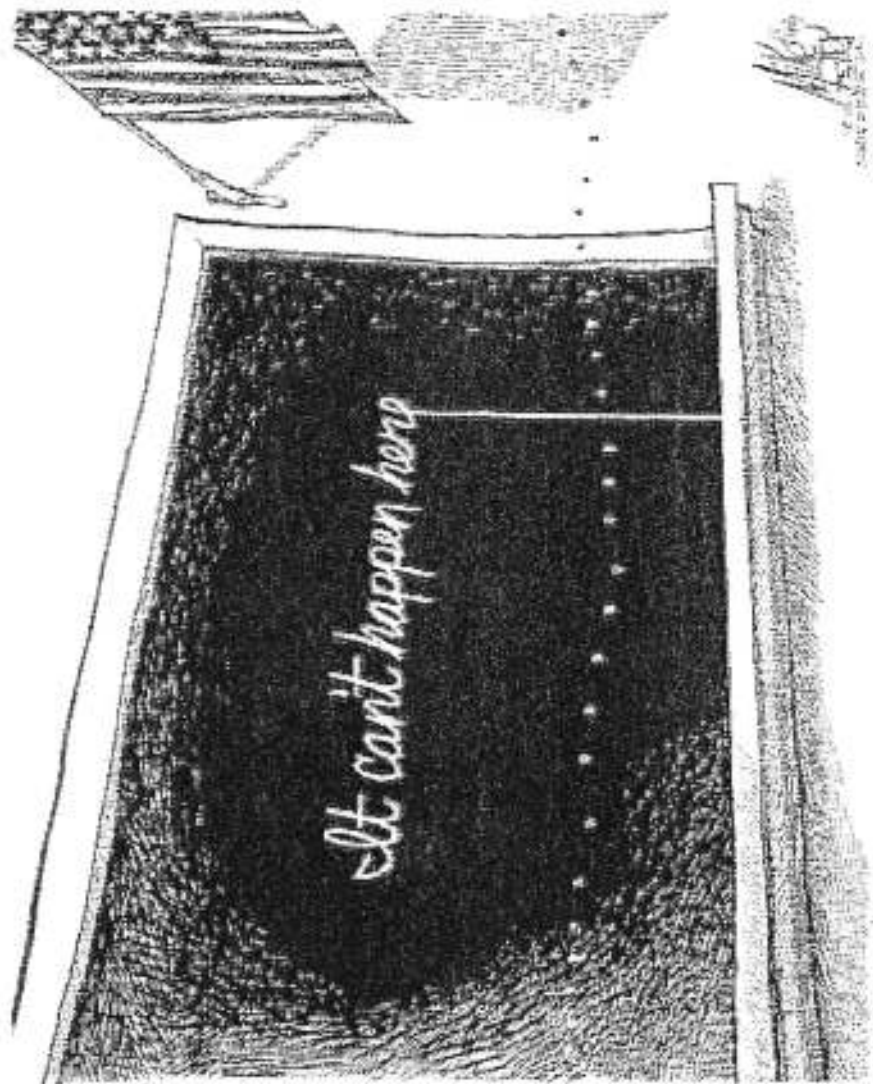
# Types of Gangs

- Street Gangs
- Hate Groups
- Occultic Gangs

# The Bottom Line

# Gang Mentality

# Myths About Girls In Gangs

- Females are not capable of committing serious violent crime.

- Females are innocent bystanders or peripheral players in gang activity.

- Female violent crime is not gang related.

- Male gang members cause most of the problems, not females.

# Types of girl gang members...

- Auxiliary members of male gangs.
- Female members of co-ed gangs.
- Female leaders within co-ed gangs.
- Autonomous all-female gangs.

# Other forms of groups

- Party Crews
- Legitimate-Appearing Groups
- Wannabes
- Ethnicity/Race of the Gang
- Tomboy vs. Feminine Female

# Identifying Female Gang Members

- Clothing
- Tattoos/Branding
- Makeup
- Jewelry/Piercing
- Behavior
- Possessions ie. Weapons, Gang lit.
- Unexplained riches or drugs

# Role of Females in Gangs

- Holding/Transporting Drugs and Guns
- Information and Contraband Couriers to and from Prisons
- Strategic Employment ie. Law Firms, Bookstores, County Clerk offices, Police Departments, Correctional Institutions, Banks.
- Counterintelligence and Lures
- Criminal Support/Gangbanging

# Role of Females in Gangs

- Purchasing Weapons
- Hiding Money
- Behind-The Scenes Domestic Support...

# Why Girls Join Gangs

- Immediate Financial Opportunity
- Identity and Status
- Social Life
- Peer Pressure
- Family Dysfunction
- Family Breakdown
- Family Tradition
- Family/Cultural Rebellion

# Why Girls Join Gangs

- Something is Missing
- Rites of Passage
- Protection
- The Gang is There

# Recruitment and Initiation

- Violated In/Jumped In
- Mission
- Sexed In/Rolled In/Diced In
- Walked In/Blessed In

# Getting Out of a Gang

- Leave of Absence/Blessed Out
- Jumped Out
- Gradual Withdrawal
- Clean Break
- Drug Abuse
- Incarceration
- Death

# Names of Some Female Gangs

- BIB- Black Insane Bitches
- Cobralettes
- Disciple Queens
- Latin Queens
- Latinettes
- Madison St. Girls
- MIB- Mafia Insane Bitches
- SIB- Southside Insane Bitches

# INTERVENTIONS

- Programs must develop culturally-sensitive, gender-specific approaches.

- Girls' problems are often gender related: sexual abuse, male violence, drug/alcohol abuse, role in the family, occupational inequality, early motherhood.

# Review of successful programs

- Comprehensive Counseling Component

- Educational and Occupational Support

- Address the needs of young women not able to remain with their families.

- Provide the young women with access to caring adults and organized community activities.

# Strategies for Disruptive Girls

- Focus on their ability to make good choices.

- Focus on their personal strengths.

- Redirect Defiant Behavior

- Redirect Attention-seeking Behavior

- Redirect Showing-off Behavior

- Redirect Disrespectful Behavior

- Redirect Argumentative Behavior

- Redirect Apathetic Behavior

# GIRLS AND VIOLENCE

Jeanne Weiler
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Girls' involvement in delinquency and crime, though still less than boys', appears to have increased significantly in the last two decades. There is, however, little knowledge about the causes of girls' violence, and few studies have been conducted on young women's crime and delinquency. Meda Chesney-Lind and her associates have undertaken the most comprehensive analysis of these studies. They have provided much insight into this complex issue, showing significant differences between violent acts by girls and boys. This digest reviews current research on girls' delinquent and violent behavior, the factors contributing to it, and effective programming strategies to prevent it.

## The Scope of Girls' Delinquency and Violence

### The Nature of Girls' Crime

Girls are involved in more violent crime than they were a decade ago; their murder arrest rate is up 64 percent, for example. Still, violent crimes accounted for only 3.4 percent of girls' arrests in 1994 (Chesney-Lind & Brown, 1999). Changes in the way girls are charged, as opposed to the commission of more violent crimes by girls, may explain part of the increase in arrests for violence. For example, a girl who, in self-defense, shoves her parents out of the way as she tries to run away is now likely to be arrested for assault, a criminal offense; previously, she would have been arrested for the lesser status offense of running away (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). Nevertheless, status offenses (considered offenses only because the perpetrator is a minor), such as running away, prostitution, or curfew violations, continue to comprise most of girls' arrests, possibly because of a public tendency to sexualize girls' offenses and attempt to control their behavior (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998).

### Differences Between Girls' and Boys' Violence

Violent crimes committed by girls differ significantly from boys' offenses. Boys are two to three times more likely to carry weapons, and girls are more likely to use knives than guns, boys' weapon of choice. Girls are more likely than boys to murder someone as a result of a conflict rather than during a crime, and to murder and fight with family members (Girls Incorporated, 1996). Girls remain less likely than boys to be arrested in general, and far less likely to be arrested for violent crimes (homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault) and serious property offenses (burglary, arson). The sex ratio of arrests has changed very little over the decade, since the recent increases in the arrest of girls parallel increases in boys' arrests, suggesting that the upward trend simply "reflects overall changes in youth

behavior" (Chesney-Lind & Brown, 1999, p. 176).

## Girls' Participation in School-Related Violence

Most, but certainly not all, aggressive acts in school, such as physical fighting, bullying, and weapon carrying, are carried out by males and aimed at males. One study reported that while nearly 18 percent of the boys carry a weapon to school only 5 percent of girls do so (Flannery, 1997). Another showed, however, that in schools characterized by large numbers of boys carrying weapons, there is a correspondingly high rate of girls with weapons, although boys may carry guns while girls carry knives (Webster, Gainer, & Champion, 1993).

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## Causes of Girls' Delinquency and Crime

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## Psychosocial Theories

In the 1970s violent girls began receiving more attention from researchers because of the perceived increase in their offenses and because of the involvement of more women in scholarship. Much of the work focused on explaining why so few girls and women participate in criminal activity compared with males, rather than on what motivates females toward crime and delinquency. Biological differences between males and females were assumed to be a reason for the crime rate differential. Differences in socialization were also thought to produce aggressive and independent males and passive, dependent, and conventional females (Artz, 1998). The increase in female violence was attributed to the perpetrators' renunciation of femininity and the adoption of masculine characteristics and values. The women's movement, which fostered assertiveness and was said to encourage young women to adopt certain "male behaviors" (drinking, stealing, and fighting), was blamed as well (Adler, 1975). Subsequent research, including data showing that the increase in female crime was really not significant, discredited most of these findings (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998).

## Social and Environmental Risk Factors

Current research on adolescent violence and delinquency considers how social class, race, ethnicity, and culture interact to cause young women to behave violently (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). It also helps explain why girls join gangs: to develop skills to survive in their harsh communities and temporarily escape a dismal future (Campbell, 1991; Chesney-Lind & Joe, 1995).

Women jailed for crimes, compared with their male counterparts, are much more likely to report previous sexual or physical abuse, ranging from 40 percent to 70 percent of respondents in various surveys (Artz, 1998; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Koroki & Chesney-Lind, 1985). Violent young women are more likely to come from troubled or violent families. Their home life, characterized by poverty, divorce, parental death, abandonment, alcoholism, and frequent abuse, leaves them quick to anger, distrust, and revenge (Artz, 1998; Koroki & Chesney-Lind, 1985).

Girls from poor families may seek recognition by adopting a "bad girl" image upon finding that their college aspirations will go unrealized, as they are unable to gain status through white middle-class means (i.e., schooling, careers). But they also embrace traditional gender role expectations for the future: marriage, support by a man, a large family, and work in stereotypically female jobs. They think that men should be strong and assertive, and women passive and nonviolent (Koroki & Chesney-Lind, 1985). Such beliefs may hold young women in abusive romantic relationships and raise their risk of engaging in delinquent and violent acts (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998).

Artz (1998) hypothesizes that a major factor in girls' aggression toward other girls is a general negative view of females based on a personal low sense of self-worth, resulting from sexual abuse and

an internalized belief in women's inferiority. Bottcher's study (1986) of young African American and Latina women incarcerated for serious offenses identified additional factors which propelled them toward violence: **leaving home or being kicked out; considerable free time without adult supervision;** and an **"inadvertent drift" into violence** and crime as their lives began to fall apart.

In general, school failure increases young people's risk for violence and delinquency (Artz.1998), although poor school performance appears to have a stronger effect on girls than boys (Rankin, 1980). While high grades and positive self-esteem seem to depress girls' involvement in violence and delinquency, boys' high grades raise their self-esteem, creating favorable orientations to risk-taking and thus greater delinquency (Heimer, 1995).

## Implications for Interventions

To serve young women effectively, programs must develop culturally-sensitive, gender-specific approaches. They must take into account the fact that girls' problems are often gender related (i.e., sexual abuse, male violence, role in the family, occupational inequality, early motherhood), and must develop gender-specific approaches. Unfortunately, funding for programs addressing delinquent girls' unique needs has been low: in 1975, for example, only $1.00 of every $4.00 donated by corporations was spent on programs for girls (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998), and a recent review of youth program evaluations showed that only 2.3 percent of delinquency programs served girls only.

A review of the few existing programs effective with at-risk young women suggests that three common elements combine to support them in all facets of their lives (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). First, a **comprehensive counseling component** addresses the multiple problems of delinquent and at-risk young women, including sexual abuse and violence in teen relationships. Second, successful programs include **educational and occupational support.** Third, **they address the needs of young women not able to remain with their families.** Further, they provide young women with access to caring adults and organized community activities.

Girls Incorporated (1996) has recently published a review of promising programs which target delinquent and at-risk girls. Effective programs include many Girls Incorporated programs which are sponsored nationally. Examples include Friendly PEERsuasion, which addresses issues such as helping girls to avoid substance abuse; Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy, which teaches strategies for avoiding early pregnancy through better parent-daughter communication and postponing sexual activity, and provides health care; Operation SMART, which enhances science and technology skills; and FUTURE (Females Unifying Teens to Undertake Responsible Education), which provides peer support in such areas as substance abuse, sexual and physical abuse, and gang involvement. Girls Incorporated has also identified local programs whose effectiveness results from customization for the local female population.

Finally, because male violence and aggression against young women are often a factor in female delinquency and violence, separate programs need to be developed for aggressive and violent men and boys. This would minimize the risk of female victimization and, in turn, reduce the risk of girls' participation in violence.

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# Oh Boy...Girls have ADD too!

Margaret S. Friedman, Psy.D.

Elizabeth* was known as the preschooler who flitted among the play centers, participating in the activities and projects she liked and avoiding the others. Cathy was defiant in kindergarten and daydreamed about playing with friends after school.

Michele was on the honor roll and a "perfectly behaved" 3rd grade student, who threw tantrums at home, was extraordinarily messy, and told her parents that she was hopelessly and completely dissatisfied with her life.

Judith was gifted, but falling behind in math, and aloof or too bossy with the other 5th grade girls. Beth, who had learning disabilities, blew up at peers who teased her at middle school, making things even worse.

At 15, Eve was pregnant, drinking beer, smoking cigarettes and pot, and barely passing 10th grade. And at 19, Laurie's leg shook constantly as she struggled to concentrate on her college reading assignments. She maintained her 3.7 grade point average, but was in serious financial trouble and had developed an eating disorder.

What all of these girls had in common was ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder).

## What are girls with ADD like?

Not every girl with ADD has these particular problems, but they are typical characteristics of girls with ADD. Most struggle to master the challenges of school, be they academic or high demands for self-controlled, socially appropriate behavior.

Many have trouble managing their emotions or coping with the everyday stress and conflict inherent in family functioning. It is also common for these girls to have difficulties initiating, developing, and maintaining friendships. Invariably, they are vulnerable to low self-esteem and beliefs that they are "dumb," lazy, or otherwise inadequate.

The diagnostic process often begins when a parent, a teacher, a physician, or a therapist begins to wonder whether ADD is the problem. Girls may be diagnosed as early as preschool, not until adulthood, or anytime in between. All too often, though, girls with ADD are not diagnosed or are incorrectly diagnosed.

## Do as many girls have ADD as boys?

Traditionally, ADD has been thought to be much more common in boys than in girls. In fact, it used to be exceedingly rare for girls to be diagnosed with ADD. Thus, most of what we know about children and teens with ADD is based on research with boys.

As assessment and classification of ADD have become more reliable, and now include forms of ADD

without hyperactivity, more girls are being identified, studied, and treated. Some experts now believe that ADD (with and without hyperactivity) may be only 3 times more prevalent in boys, or may even occur as frequently in females as in males.

## Diagnosing girls with ADD

ADD in girls may "look" different from ADD in boys, and the reasons girls are referred for help may also be quite different from the reasons boys are referred. For example, a girl might first be noticed as having a problem with friendships or mood, while a boy with ADD is more likely to be noticed because of hyperactivity or aggressive behavior.

In fact, girls with ADD tend to be less hyperactive-impulsive, less aggressive and defiant, and have fewer conduct problems than boys with ADD. Girls, on the other hand, are more likely than boys to have anxiety along with their ADD.

Actually though, girls and boys with ADD have been found to be more similar than different. As a group, girls and boys with ADD are not substantially different when it comes to the number, type, or severity of symptoms.

Both girls and boys with ADD basically have the same types of underlying problems: difficulty with the regulation of attention and/or activity level, and poor impulse control. Girls and boys with ADD are not necessarily different from each other in areas such as academic performance, fine motor skills, social functioning, or emotional adjustment.

Girls and boys are diagnosed according to the same criteria, delineated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th Edition (DSM-IV), published by the American Psychiatric Association (1994).

The diagnosis of ADD, now called Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), is made on the basis of confirming six or more specified symptoms of either inattention or hyperactivity-impulsivity which have persisted (6 months or more), are maladaptive, and are below the individual's overall developmental level.

Symptoms must be present since childhood, cause impairment in at least two settings (e.g., school and home), and significantly impair social or academic functioning. Further, a number of other conditions, which could account for the symptoms, must be evaluated and either ruled out or diagnosed along with ADHD.

DSM-IV categorizes ADHD into 3 main subtypes:

1. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type
2. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type
3. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type (meeting criteria for both inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity).

## Are girls with ADD hyperactive?

Some girls with ADD certainly are hyperactive. And girls who are hyperactive, especially if they are also defiant and/or aggressive, are more likely to be diagnosed with ADD early. These behaviors are generally easy to observe, often disruptive, and, in our culture, unusual in little girls.

In the past, it was almost exclusively these very active and disruptive girls who were diagnosed. This was likely related to the belief that the essential defining feature of the syndrome was hyperactivity. Girls who are "hyperactive" are also often described as talkative, impulsive (for example, blurting out comments in class and in social situations), and over-controlling in their peer relationships.

Many, possibly most, girls with ADD, though, likely fall into the category of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Primarily Inattentive Type. They might be described as quiet daydreamers, socially awkward or shy, underachievers, underactive, forgetful, disorganized, anxious, or depressed. Until recently, accurate and timely diagnoses were highly unlikely for these girls. Many were overlooked. Their symptoms did not seem severe or did not disrupt classroom or home routines.

If these inattentive girls were evaluated, they were likely to be treated for anxiety, depression, mood or learning problems. Rarely was the possibility considered that these symptoms accompanied or developed in reaction to underlying ADD. The few non-hyperactive girls who were diagnosed with ADD during their elementary school years were likely to have their attention problems noticed during a learning disability evaluation.

## Cautions about gender differences

Our understanding of gender issues in ADD is complicated by a number of factors. Society has different expectations of behavior for boys and girls, and there are also gender differences which occur regardless of ADD.

For example, boys, in general, are known for tendencies to react to stress by "acting out" against others or the environment. Girls are more likely to turn stress inward, which can result in anxiety, depression, withdrawal, guilt, or physical symptoms (e.g., headaches and stomachaches).

In the neurosciences, gender differences continue to be discovered in the structure and functioning of the human brain. Thus, some differences between girls and boys with ADD may be more closely related to gender than to ADD.

Studies of ADD have become more sophisticated and now include larger numbers of girls. Some are utilizing high tech brain imaging techniques. While we can be more confident about the conclusions reached, there is still more to understand about gender differences, ADD, and how they interact.

It is also important to remember that research compares groups of girls with groups of boys. Even when significant differences between the groups are found to exist, the difference does not necessarily apply to any one particular girl or boy with ADD.

## What else do we need to know?

There is still a lot to learn about girls with ADD. Is their outcome better, worse, or the same as males? What is the risk of these girls becoming pregnant in adolescence, using alcohol and street drugs, developing eating disorders, or dropping out of high school and college? Will they respond better to particular treatments?

A recent study (by Alan J. Zametkin, M.D.) of a small group of adolescents found a difference in brain metabolic activity between girls with without ADD, but not between boys with and without ADD. Neuroimaging studies may lead to new important ways of understanding gender-related aspects of ADD and its treatment.

## What can be done now?

Parents, teachers, physicians, and therapists should encourage the early and accurate identification and treatment of girls with ADD. ADD is largely an inherited condition. Girls (as well as boys) with a first-degree (biological) relative with ADD, and/or family members with disorders of anxiety, mood, learning, drug or alcohol use, and antisocial behavior are at increased risk of having ADD themselves. The incidence of ADD is also high in adopted children; thus, girls who have been adopted have an increased risk of ADD.

All girls having substantial difficulty regulating activity level and/or attention, compared to other kids their age, deserve careful and thorough evaluation. ADD rarely occurs in isolation from other problems. It is important for girls to be adequately treated for their attention deficits as well as for the social, emotional, and learning difficulties which tend to come along with it.

As far as we know, there is no essential difference between girls and boys in their response to treatment. Their response to stimulant medication is the same, though adolescent females with the disorder may experience an intensification of ADD symptoms premenstrually and need an adjustment in their medication regimen to alleviate this.

A comprehensive treatment effort, tailored to the needs of the individual girl and her family, is likely to be most effective. Girls with ADD deserve help in understanding ADD, its treatment, and themselves.

## What happened to those girls?

Elizabeth, Cathy, Michele, Judith, Beth, and Eve responded well to either stimulant medication or a combination of medications. Other types of help, such as education about ADD for the family, and the development of social skills, stress management techniques, and learning strategies, were also beneficial.

Elizabeth's parents planned for her to attend a kindergarten class in the fall which offered more structure and adult attention and support. Later, testing defined specific learning disabilities which had contributed to her avoidant behavior in preschool.

Cathy's parents and teachers came to better understand her behavior once the diagnosis of ADD was made. They developed more reasonable expectations and provided the extra structure and consistency she needed. Her parents and teachers also learned to use behavioral techniques which fostered cooperation between Cathy and people in positions of authority.

In family therapy, Michele and her parents learned to manage stress and conflict more adaptively. Judith changed schools so she could obtain more individualized instruction. She also utilized feedback and support in group therapy to develop better friendships. Counseling sessions helped her to express feelings more honestly.

For Beth, individual and group therapy sessions offered emotional support and the chance to learn new, more effective skills and techniques to assert herself with peers. Math tutoring was also essential to Beth's academic progress.

Eve's grades dramatically improved, once the pieces of the treatment plan fell into place: an optimal medication plan, individual and family counseling, and changes in her high school curriculum. She became proud of her artistic talents, and her artwork has been entered in competition!

Soon after psychological testing was completed and psychotherapy started, Laurie regained better control of her eating. She more realistically faced her financial problems, and developed a plan to pay off her debts. She will be meeting with a physician to discuss a trial of medication to treat her ADD.

All of these girls continue to struggle. They have not solved all of their problems, but each has found a better path. The individualized combination of treatments for each girl has provided relief, support, and opportunities to experience success. All know themselves a lot better, and all are feeling much better about themselves.

*The girls described in this story are composites of patients, and all names have been changed to protect patient confidentiality.

**Editor's note:** Margaret S. Friedman, Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist in private practice who has more than 20 years of experience working with children, adolescents, and families. Formerly a psychologist at The Children's Hospital, Denver, she developed the ADD Subspecialty Program in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and served as its Clinical Director. She specializes in the evaluation and treatment of ADD, mood disorders, and adjustment to illness and handicaps in childhood and adolescence. She leads groups for parents of ADD/LD children, for girls with ADD/LD, and is starting a group for women with ADD. She can be reached at 1720 South Bellaire Street, Suite 1206, Denver, Colorado 80222 USA, Telephone: (303) 753-0686

# Ad Campaign Targets Drug Abuse By Girls...

By Gary Fields, USA TODAY

MENDHAM, N.J. – As Joe Hennen walks through the halls of DAYTOP Village, there are nearly as many girls in the long-term drug rehabilitation center as there are boys.

It hasn't always been this way. When DAYTOP opened in 1991, there was room for 50 residents, 13 female and 37 male. "It was hard keeping the 13 female beds filled," says Hennen, the execution director of the facility. "Drugs was much more a male problem."

Two years ago, that changed. More girls started showing up for treatment, creating a waiting list of four months. Now, plans are under way to remodel the facility, so it can house 35 boys and 35 girls.

Hennen and his staff are seeing a national trend.

"The drug abuse level among girls is now essentially the same as it is with boys. That's not the same as it was 10 years ago when it was overwhelmingly a young man's problem," says Barry McCaffrey, director of White House drug policy.

The 1999 National Drug Use Survey, which questioned 25,500 young people ages 12 to 17, found that 16% of the girls and 16.7% of the boys had drug problems.

To address the increase in girls' drug use, McCaffrey and Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala are unveiling an advertising campaign at 10 a.m. today at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. The campaign focuses solely on drug abuse by adolescent girls.

The $7 million ad campaign is part of a five-year, $2 billion government-led media blitz to address drug abuse.

The ads feature Olympic gold medal figure skater Tara Lipinski and Brandi Chastain, a member of the 1999 U.S. Women's World Cup soccer team.

The message: "There's never been a better time to be a girl. There's never been a better time to be what you are, a force to be reckoned with, a girl. There's never been a better time not to use drugs. Don't blow it."

McCaffrey says girls with drug issues bring a different set of problems with them than boys do: They are more likely to be sexually abused or fall victim

to domestic violence. They also run an increased risk of unsafe sexual practices, he says.

"Many young girls go through a period of time where their self-esteem is overly dependent on external factors. Drugs help them, they believe, with that vulnerability," McCaffrey says. "Tara Lipinski is telling them if they want to get high, do it through sports."

Not everyone agrees the ads will help. Ethan Nadelmann, director of the Lindesmith Center, questions whether the ads will help turn kids away from drugs or "are we reaching kids that are not going to use drugs anyway?"

He suggests more money be spent on expanding organized after-school activities and treatment. "The question has to be what's your fallback strategy for the teenagers who decide to just say yes to drugs," he says.

At DAYTOP, the residents and counselors think the advertisements will have an impact. At the very least, they open up discussions about drugs.

"Mostly what the girls are looking for here is acceptance and a little self-esteem and a little self-worth," says Carolyn Wilson, 37, a DAYTOP counselor and a recovering addict. She began smoking marijuana when she was 13 and descended into prostitution before she began her recovery.

Ronneesha, 17, has been a resident at DAYTOP for two months. She is HIV-positive. Her mother has AIDS, and her father is dead.

She started using drugs when she was 12. By the time she was 15, she was prostituting herself to earn money for crack cocaine. In the environment she grew up in, there were no positive messages about staying away from drugs, she says. She thinks the advertisements might have helped.

Now, she has a message of her own: "Stay away from drugs. They are no good for you. They don't make your life better, and eventually, you're going to die. There's nothing else to it. You see where it got me."

# Choices Briefs

# An Overview of Research on Girls and Violence

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## Introduction

Youth violence, and particularly violence carried out by girls, has been the subject of intense media attention recently, with an ever-increasing number of girls portrayed as carrying guns in their mouths and participating in violent crime. Although the percentage of girls' involvement in delinquency and crime has increased in the last two decades, it is still far below the level of boys' involvement, and it differs quite significantly.

There is a paucity of literature on girls' violence, as most research on youth violence does not distinguish between girls and boys. The most comprehensive and extensive literature reviews on young women's crime and delinquency have been conducted by Meda Chesney-Lind and her associates. While not focusing exclusively on violent girls, their work on girls in trouble with the law provides much insight into the complex issue of girls' aggression and violence. The summary of research in this brief is, for the most part, guided by their work. Overall, the brief reviews the extent of girls' delinquency and violence, the ways they differ from boys', the contributing factors, and effective program strategies to prevent female delinquency.

## The Scope of Girls' Delinquency, Crime, and Violence

### The Extent of Girls' Involvement

An understanding of the extent of girls' delinquency can be gleaned from statistics, as compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other official agencies, and from self-report surveys conducted with young people. These data demonstrate that girls are far less likely than boys to be arrested; in 1994, for example, girls accounted for one-fourth of youthful arrests (Chesney-Lind & Brown, 1999). However, by all accounts, girls appear to be involved in substantially more violent crime than they were a decade ago. Based on an analysis of FBI statistics, arrests of girls for murder were up 64 percent; robbery arrests, 114 percent; aggravated assault, 137 percent; and other assaults, 126 percent (Chesney-Lind & Brown, 1999).

There are a number of reasons why these figures need to be interpreted cautiously. First, there has been a parallel increase in boys' arrest rate for violent offenses since 1985. Chesney-Lind and Brown assert, "this pattern, then, reflects overall changes in youth behavior, rather than dramatic changes and shifts in the character of girls' behavior" (1999, p. 176). In addition, boys are far more likely than girls to be arrested for violent crimes (homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault) and serious property

offenses (burglary, arson). Girls account for a very small percentage of violent crime, and violent crime by girls is a small percentage of all girls' delinquency, and it has remained essentially unchanged since the mid-1980s. Only 2.1 percent of girls' arrests in 1985 were for serious crimes of violence; the figure climbed only slightly, to 3.4 percent, by 1994. Thus, large increases in girls' violent crime rate translate into only small increases in the number of crimes committed.

Another explanation for the increase in girls' violent offenses is a redefinition of what constitutes a violent offense. For example, a review of 2,000 cases of young women referred to the Maryland juvenile justice system for "person-to-person" offenses revealed that almost all involved assault (Mayer, 1994). A closer look at the cases showed that approximately one-half were incidents with family members such as "a girl hitting her mother and her mother subsequently pressing charges," thus criminalizing the girls' action. In the past, such aggression might have been dealt with informally, or the girl may have been charged with a less serious status offense ("a person in need of supervision"). More recently, a girl who hits a family member or acquaintance (often while defending herself or attempting to leave) is charged with battery or assault, is placed in the juvenile justice system, and often goes to prison. Several researchers have found this practice, sometimes referred to as "bootstrapping," especially prevalent in the delinquency of African American girls (Bartollas, 1993).

Other factors that may account for the large increases in assault charges for girls are more stringent law enforcement, including "zero tolerance" school policies which bring police onto school grounds more readily, and the arrest of girls who skirmish with other girls (Chesney-Lind, personal communication, February 1999).

## The Nature of Girls' Crime

When girls do commit violent crimes, they differ significantly from boys'. For example, girls are more likely to use knives than guns and to murder someone as a result of conflict rather than during a crime. Girls are also more likely than boys to murder family members.

Self-report data also show that boys are far more likely to commit aggressive acts than girls. One recent study on self-reported aggression showed that about a third of girls, as compared with half the boys, had been in a physical fight in the last year. Girls were far more likely to fight with a parent or sibling, while boys were more likely to fight with friends or strangers. Boys were also two to three times more likely to report carrying a weapon in the past month (Girls Incorporated, 1996).

Despite the aforementioned "bootstrapping" of offenses, girls, when arrested, are still much more likely to be arrested for status offenses, such as running away, prostitution, or curfew violations, than for violent offenses. Chesney-Lind and Shelden (1998) suggest that girls are arrested disproportionately more than boys for status offenses (28 percent versus 11 percent) because of a tendency to sexualize their offenses and an attempt to control their behavior. Thus, while crime and delinquency among youth have risen overall since the 1970s, the character of juvenile arrests has not changed.

## Girls' Participation in School-Related Violence

Most aggressive acts in schools, such as physical fighting, bullying, and weapon possession, are carried out by males and aimed at males, although females also engage in similar aggressive acts. Indeed, student-on-student assault is the most common form of school violence reported. According to a recent national study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one-half of boys and one-quarter of girls reported being physically assaulted by someone in their school (Hamburg, 1998). Tolan and Guerra (1994) reported that almost one-half of urban school children have witnessed

someone being beaten or attacked in the preceding year. In a recent CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 18 percent of boys and 5 percent of girls reported carrying a weapon to school (Flannery, 1997).

While boys' rates of aggressive incidents in school are higher than girls', girls' rates are not inconsequential. For example, in schools characterized by large numbers of boys carrying weapons, there is a correspondingly high rate of girls who also carry weapons. Webster, Gainer, and Champion (1993) found that in school settings where high numbers of boys carry guns (40 percent), a high percentage of girls (67 percent) carry knives.

## Psychosocial Theories of Girls' Delinquency and Crime

Relatively little attention has been paid to female experiences with crime and delinquency because it has been generally associated with boys. In fact, most early researchers viewed delinquency and gang activity as strictly male pursuits; when females were discussed they were viewed as either tomboys or sex objects (Campbell, 1984, 1991). In the 1970s, though, violent girls began receiving more attention because of the perceived increase in their offending and the involvement of more women in scholarship. Much of the work focused on explaining why so few girls and women participate in criminal activity compared to males, rather than on what motivates females toward crime and delinquency (Artz, 1998).

It was thought that differences in biology and socialization explain differences in the crime rate. Boys become aggressive and independent while girls become passive, dependent, and conventional (Artz, 1998). The increase in female violence was attributed to the perpetrators' renunciation of femininity and the adoption of masculine characteristics and values. The women's movement, which fostered female assertiveness and was said to encourage young women to adopt certain "male behaviors" (drinking, stealing, and fighting), was also blamed (Adler, 1975).

Subsequent research, including data showing that the increase in female crime was really not as significant as thought, discredited much of this research. Further, scholars and youth workers began to call for more nuanced approaches to understanding girls' aggression and violence which would consider how social class, race, ethnicity, and culture interact to create variations in the way young women experience and make use of violence (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998).

## Risk Factors for Girls' Violence and Aggression

There have been few in-depth studies exploring the pathways to violence for girls. The handful of studies that do exist, however, yield important findings. Several risk factors that appear to foster young women's delinquent and violent acts have been isolated: physical and sexual victimization, negative attitudes toward school, lack of academic success, perceived lack of opportunities, a great deal of social activity, low self-esteem, and traditional beliefs about women's roles. Specifically, for example, the girls in Chesney-Lind and Koroki's study (1996) of female delinquent girls of racially mixed backgrounds in Hawaii all reported severe family problems: poverty, divorce, parental death, abandonment, alcoholism, and frequent experiences of abuse.

### Abuse and Victimization

The relationship of physical and sexual abuse to women's criminal activity and violence can be seen clearly in studies on the backgrounds of incarcerated women and girls. Compared to their male counterparts, women jailed for crimes are much more likely to report previous sexual or physical

abuse. In one study, almost one-half of the incarcerated women surveyed on their backgrounds reported that they had been abused previously while 12 percent of their male counterparts reported they had been.

Delinquent girls have also reported very high rates of physical and sexual abuse, ranging from approximately 40-70 percent in various studies (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). For example, participants in a Canadian study on white working-class violent girls (Artz, 1998) revealed frequent experiences of sexual and/or physical abuse in the home, with most describing violent homes characterized by dominant, abusive, and often alcoholic fathers and/or brothers, and mothers who made a tremendous effort to minimize tensions and victimization. The young women, in attempting to cope with the violence and silence, learned that power and control in the family resided in physical force. The message that survival means dominating the weaker members of the group guided them in their relationships outside the home as well.

In fact, Artz (1998) argues that girls' violence against other girls is grounded in the idea of "horizontal" violence. This means that members of oppressed or powerless groups (such as the girls in homes with dominating and abusive men) view similarly situated girls through their oppressor's eyes and mirror the oppressor's behaviors. Thus, in hoping to gain some measure of power, they beat up other girls. While the aggressor may feel powerful momentarily, the feeling is short-lived as it does little to change her status; rather, it perpetuates a cycle of retaliation. As Artz found, violent girls reported higher rates of victimization in the form of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and attacks by a group of peers than nonviolent girls.

## School Failure

School failure has been shown to increase the risk that young people will turn to violence and delinquency, although poor school performance appears to have a stronger effect on girls than boys (Rankin, 1980). For example, in one study on the delinquency of African American youth, girls who reported more involvement in delinquency and violence were more likely to say they were not satisfied with their school experience, whereas for boys, "poor family relationships" rather than school experience seemed to predict involvement in delinquency (Farnworth, 1984). And while high grades and positive self-esteem seem to depress girls' involvement in violence and delinquency, boys' high grades raise their self-esteem, creating favorable orientations to risk-taking and thus greater delinquency (Heimer, 1995).

## Additional Risk Factors

Many girls with extremely troubled school and social lives nevertheless held high aspirations of graduating from high school and going to college. However, unable to gain status through white middle-class means (i.e., schooling, careers, etc.) because of their families' low income, they sought recognition through adoption of a "bad girl" image. These girls also expressed very traditional gender role expectations for the future: a desire to marry and primarily be supported by a man, to have a large family, and to work in a stereotypically female job. They believed that men should be strong and assertive and women passive and nonviolent. Chesney-Lind and Shelden suggest that traditional beliefs and aspirations influence young women's relationships with romantic partners and serve to hold them in abusive relationships, raising their risk of involvement in delinquent and violent acts.

Moreover, the sexual abuse of girls plays a role in their low sense of self-worth and also contributes to their negative views of other females. In fact, Artz hypothesizes that a major factor in girls' aggression toward other girls is an internalized belief in women's inferiority that allows violent girls to rationalize such violence. She urges that much more research be conducted on how violent girls interpret and

make sense of their own violence.

In a study of young African American and Latina women who were incarcerated for serious offenses in California, Bottcher (1986) identified three aspects of their lives that propelled them toward violence: leaving home or being kicked out and considerable free time without adult supervision; frequent experiences with physical and sexual abuse; and an inadvertent drift into violence and crime as their lives began to fall apart. Most of the young women indicated that they felt alienated from family and peers and suffered from low self-esteem. Artz's study of violent girls (who were not involved in the criminal justice system) also provided detailed accounts of troubled families, experiences with abuse, internalized notions of women's low social status, and poor performance and problems with discipline in school.

## Gang Involvement

Female gangs make up a relatively small percentage of gangs nationwide. One estimate puts the number of female gang members at 7,200, or only 4 percent of youth identified as gang members (Chesney-Lind, Shelden, & Joe, 1996). Moore (1996), however, who studied gangs in Los Angeles, estimated that girls accounted for one-third of the youth in gangs.

There are a number of excellent accounts of gang girls and their lives and experiences in gangs. The best known perhaps is by Ann Campbell (1984, 1991) whose pathbreaking book, Girls in the Gang, explored the lives of African American and Latina female gang members in New York City. She documented the acute hardships faced by these low-income women, such as turbulent family lives, poverty, abuse, lack of education, and the everyday difficulties they faced as poor young women of color. For many of the young women, joining a gang served a social function: gangs provided a place where they belonged, and were accepted and protected. Moreover, they participated in violence because it was an expected means of survival and a way to prove themselves capable of fighting and to establish their reputation. Having a reputation provided protection for themselves and their female friends, and gave them a sense of worth and power. Gang girls also participated in violence to settle arguments over boys.

Gang participation provides girls with skills to survive in their harsh communities and at the same time allows them to escape temporarily a dismal future (Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995). According to Campbell (1984, 1991), joining a gang is an adaptive solution to difficult life circumstances, such as a bleak occupational future because of a lack of education and marketable skills, male subordination in the home, the sole responsibility for children, social isolation in the home, and the social and economic marginalization resulting from living in poor communities and the threat of victimization from crime.

## Program Development to Address the Needs of Violent Girls

Programs serving young violent women effectively must take into account girls' status in a gendered society. While delinquent and violent girls share with their male counterparts many of the same problems, girls' problems are often a result of their status as females (such as sexual abuse, male violence, oppression by family members, occupational inequality, and early motherhood). As such, they require different program approaches from boys. Unfortunately, the record for funding girl-focused programs or those with components which address delinquent girls' unique needs has not been good. In 1975, for example, only $1.00 of every $4.00 donated by corporations was spent on girls' programming (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). Recently, a review of youth program evaluations showed that only 2.3 percent of delinquency programs served girls only.

An evaluation of the few existing programs effective with at-risk young women suggests that they have three common elements that combine in a culturally-sensitive approach to support girls in all facets of their lives (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). While counseling can be an effective component, it must be included in a complete program addressing the multiple needs of delinquent and at-risk young women, covering sensitively such areas as sexual abuse and violence in teen relationships. Programs also need to include educational and occupational support and skill-building. They also must respond to the many needs of young women no longer able to live with their families. Finally, girls need access to caring adults, involvement in organized community activities, and other protective environments to help them mature into healthy and productive women.

Girls Incorporated (1996) has recently published a review of promising programs that target delinquent girls and girls at risk of getting into trouble. Common to most of them is an emphasis on addressing the needs of young women in all spheres of their lives: family, educational, occupational, and health. Examples of effective programs include many of the Girls Incorporated programs that are sponsored nationally, such as Friendly PEERsuasion, which addresses issues such as helping girls to avoid substance abuse; Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy, which teaches girls prevention strategies including better parent-daughter communication and skill-building in postponing sexual activity, and provides health care; Operation SMART, aimed at enhancing skills in science and technology; and FUTURE (Females Unifying Teens to Undertake Responsible Education), which provides peer support to young troubled women in such areas as substance abuse, sexual and physical abuse, and avoiding gang involvement.

There are also notable local programs targeting young women sponsored by Girls Incorporated. For example, PACE (Practical, Academic, Cultural, Educational) in Florida, cited by the U.S. Department of Justice as a model program, offers comprehensive services to at-risk girls 12 to 18 years old, including life management skills, counseling, community service, educational programs, and job placement services. A unique program in Minneapolis which targets young Hmong women focuses on living in two cultures and teaches educational and vocational skill-building and provides support. This program has been particularly effective in deterring young women from gang involvement, and is highly visible and accessible to girls in the community.

Finally, because the issue of male violence and aggression against young women cannot be ignored in the understanding of female delinquency and violence, separate programs need to be developed for aggressive and violent men and boys. This would minimize the risk of female victimization and, in turn, reduce the risk of girls' participation in violence.

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# Gender Discrimination in the American Juvenile Courts System

presented by

Dr. Sharon Tracy

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No one would argue that there are differences between male and female criminals (even if gender difference is the single factor upon which individuals agree), however, the existence of the female criminal increases the complexity in defining criminality and presents issues which defy quick or easy solutions.

Does gender, and more so, equality, truly affect the fluctuation in our crime rate and cause young females to become criminals?

Gender Bias

Sojourner Truth, ex-slave and abolitionist, in 1851, said:

> Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and
>
> gathered into barns, and no man could head me--and
>
> ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as
>
> much as a man--when I could get it--and bear the
>
> lash as well! And ain't I a woman? (Gilbert, 1968:
>
> 134).

> In general, theories of female criminal behavior have
>
> been sexualized, psychologized, and syllogized. Be-
>
> ginning with the biological theory of Lombroso (1899),

elaborated in the psychological theory of Freud (1905,

1931, 1933), and modernized in the current theory

that women's liberation causes female crime, a theo-

retical perspective has developed which claims that

female crime is a product of the masculinization of

female behavior. Female criminals are more "mas-

culine" than noncriminal females, biologically, psy-

chologically, and socially. In social-psychological

terms, female behavior is a concomitant of role reversal

(Wies, 1976: 17).


Throughout the Jacksonian, Victorian, and Progressive eras, women's "proper place", as defined by White males, was centered around subservience to the dominant male. Women appeared to assume only a domestic role as housewife and mother, leaving other domains to the man.

Rothman (1978) defined this role as the "Protestant Nun." In the nineteenth century, girls who were institutionalized were under the care and supervision of matrons. These caretakers turned out young women who were "skilled in the arts of sewing, washing, ironing, and cooking" (Rothman, 1978:109).

Lombroso shaped the woman's persona in his discussion of the survival traits in women. He felt women were: (1) more primitive as they were less intelligent than men, therefore, less able to adapt to the environment; (2) unable to feel pain, therefore, oblivious to others" pain; and (3) possessed with a passive, conservative approach to life (Lombroso, 1920:109).

This is interesting in light of Lombroso's description of the female criminal. When Lombroso theorized about the occurrence of criminality in women, he characterized females as both manly and extremely vicious. This researcher would venture that Mr. Lombroso suffered from empirical neglect, depicted by the apparent conflict in his contrasting profiles of female traits and female criminals.

Freud (1933) assumed that women were inferior to men both anatomically and socially. He viewed criminality among females as nothing short of penis envy; a concerted effort to be a man.

Thomas (1923:109) said that girls are driven by four factors: the desires for new experience, for

security, for response and for recognition. He cites the male/female dichotomy as being the greatest in the more civilized societies due to the greater differentiation in sex roles. Delinquents are not rebelling against womanhood, as Lombroso claims, rather, they are acting out illegally.

Thomas denies that economics are a causation of criminal behavior. He also views justice systems as being motivated by the concerns of social order rather than concerns of what needs and desires of females might be. In short, Thomas would have females dealt with as sexual property.

Pollack's (1950) work portrays women as deceitful instigators of crime. He suggests that lesser physical strength and the menstrual psychological overlays are the important factors of females in the crime arena.

The image as homemaker, child rearer, nurse, mistress, and other related roles puts the female in good position to commit, and screen, her crimes from public view. Female criminality is largely "masked criminality" as women use deceit and indirection in committing their offenses.

Thomas and Pollock both perceive criminal women as using sexuality for ulterior purposes. Furthermore, rather than a discrepancy in crime rates. Pollock further sees the criminal justice system as that which protects women through chivalrous actions and attitudes.

Konopka (1966) contributes theoretical explanations of criminal behavior which rely on the weaknesses of the female psyche.

Cowie, et al. (1968) offer a chromosomal explanation of female delinquency. They view the female offender as different both physiologically and psychologically from the normal girl.

These authors are compared by Smart (1977) to Lombroso. Smart contends that these, and other researchers, are parallel in ideology with the philosophy adhered to in Lombroso's era.

Campbell (1981), in summarizing the viewpoint of these theorists, believes that they would find all female criminals to be either unnatural, or sick, women. In addition, Campbell believes that this postulate weighs heavily on the criminal justice system when adjudicating noncriminal females. Discriminatory practices, e.g., institutionalization for status offenses, result from this attitude, she claims.

The Lombroso school of researchers see criminality as the result of individual characteristics only vaguely affected by the economy, society, and politics; ignored are problems of sexism, racism, and class. They consider adjustments the responsibility of the individual. Klein (1973) would consider the problem on this level: women are more likely to commit crimes related to their lives which are sexually oriented. The basis for this premise is her belief that women have been relegated to the completion of only certain tasks and have had very narrow and specifically designed socialization. Klein believes that the Lombroso paradigm both influences and permeates many contemporary theories. Examples of this influence are Konopka (1966), who ignores economic and social factors, choosing instead to center on female emotions as a causation of crime, and Vedder and Somerville (1970), who exhibit a posture similar to that of Konopka. These authors appear to seize on the idea of maladjustment with the established norm and they emphasize the females' instigatory role on males' activities.

An argument could be made with the theories of Freud, Thomas, Pollock, and others, that females are driven by the same factors as males and that the male/female dichotomy is more than that defined as biological or sexual differences. Rather, it is one which is affected by society, politics, race, class, and economy. To deny economic incentives as a primary factor driving youthful offenders of both sexes is a lack of reality orientation.

Many researchers criticize the validity of the particular theories of those who offer gender related conclusions. Others have highlighted rather unique factors and approaches which may be utilized in the discussion of the male/female dichotomy. These factors include those suggested by Kay, Erskine, and Figueira-McDonough et al.

Kay (1961) believed that women in general, including those who are offenders, feel more helpless in society than men do. She cites the discrepancy between what is supposed to be the equal position of women today and their actual status. Women, Kay says, are discriminated against as members of the "weaker sex". If a girl does not learn to cope with the duality of roles a female plays, she is particularly vulnerable to deviant behavior.

Erskine (1978) presents a "caricature" relating to the sexual differential in delinquency. This sexual identification constitutes a "hyper feminine" identity--shades of the phallic approach to understanding the world of criminality.

Figuiera-McDonough et al. (1980) offers a theory of equal opportunity. Masculinity often encourages aggressiveness and femininity discourages it. She believes that given similar opportunities, males and females will behave in similar ways, both legitimately and illegitimately. The access to illegitimate opportunity and the strength to engage in such, are factors in this relationship between opportunity and delinquency. Figure-McDonough, hypothesizes that, regardless of sex, both males and females will misbehave equally.

Morris (1963) supports this premise. Her argument is that women not only meet with greater social disapproval for criminal acts than men, but also have limited access to illegitimate means. Additionally, some researchers found that societal norms affected the opportunity, or mobility, to participate in any misbehavior.

And, yet, the much discussed women's liberation movement was to have increased female mobility and provided an equalization of both treatment and activity.

National study groups appeared to support the belief that the women's equal rights movement was the event which brought "Mrs. Homemaker" out of the kitchen and into the life of "Ms Crime". It appears from Department of Justice reports over the last few years that the differences between sexes for risk of arrests were diminishing. This would appear to support the claim that women are advancing from the stereotypical cast of "noninvolved, nonaggressive" homemakers.

Adler defines the social revolution (women's liberation movement) of the sixties as the cause for a significant shift from traditional female roles to the adoption of typical male roles.

> Females...are now being found not only robbing

banks singlehandedly, but also committing assorted

armed robberies, mugging, loan-sharking operations,

extortions, murders, and a wide variety of other

aggressive, violence-oriented crimes which previously

involved only men (Adler, 1975:97).

Adler also notes that the effects have been in two areas: (1) a general imitation of masculine behavior (i.e., fighting); and (2) an increased rate of delinquency in general. In connection with violent crime, she reports an increase in gang involvement among girls, reformatory rioting, and aggressive political protesting. Adler clearly supports the premise that the women's liberation movement has not only blurred the traditional distinctions between male and female roles, but accounts for the rise in violent crime among adolescent females.

We are, therefore, asked to believe that the influence and impact of this movement caused dramatic increases in the amount and type of crime committed by females--particularly those violent acts by juveniles. This researcher would differ from Adler's posture. In victimization surveys from 1972 to 1996, the resultant statistics held that male involvement in the crimes of rape, robbery, larceny, burglary, and auto theft was proportionately much greater than was participation by women. In addition, this researcher would argue against the chivalry postulate that some authors offer, male victims' reluctance to report offenses committed by female offenders, by showing that this victimization data did not empirically support the hypothesis.

When these patterns of violence are viewed more closely, there does exist a deviation from the male criminal model. In studies of assaults and homicides committed by females, three-fourths were by women acting alone. Nine (9) out of every ten (10) were known by the female before the crime; more than half of them were close intimates and more than one-third were husbands or lovers. Most of these crimes took place at home rather than in a public place; only about a quarter were premeditated, and although the victims were most often adult males, they were often incapacitated by being drunk, ill, asleep, or otherwise off-guard.

While violent crimes are usually defined as masculine in character, involving physical strength and daring, elements of coercion and confrontation with the victim and/or specialized skills, the increase in female arrests have been largely in the area of other assaults which are relatively nonserious in nature and tend to consist of being bystanders or companions to males involved in fights, etc. This analysis basically opposes the claim that the women's movement has effected substantial increases in crimes committed by females. They did so by calling attention to the fact that the higher rates of crime began in the early 1960s, before the movement would have had any effect on crime. It appears that the new female criminal is a social fiction rather than an emergent problem of large proportions.

Other statistics, such as those presented by Curran (1984) also serve to debunk the women's movement-crime causation myth. These findings also reveal that the major increase in violent

crime by females (adults and juveniles) occurred before this era. Curran actually cites a reduction in the total number of offenses in the post-liberation period. While increases appear for the category of violent crimes, Curran attributes this to a legal reclassification (removal of status offenses from the 1976 Juvenile Act) in the juvenile justice system.

Female offenders are usually from minority groups. They are largely unemployed and must care for themselves and their children. Half have not graduated from high school and their limited work experience has taken the form of low-paid, low-skilled jobs, further limiting their potential. The psychological independence and expanded economic opportunities of the women's movement is meaningless for this group; instead these females are involved in the struggle for economic, emotional, and physical survival.

This researcher found on self-report surveys that data regarding female delinquency may be correct, but not complete. Females often do commit status offenses, but no more often than males. The high proportion of these female offenders in the juvenile justice system is due to societal reaction to this behavior. The stereotype of a wayward, promiscuous female is certainly enough to disregard the chivalrous treatment myth.

Juvenile courts tend to over penalize females. Attitudes and ideologies of juvenile justice administration could well result in violations of the Fourteenth Amendment under the equal protection clause by leading them to award females longer sentences than males under the guise of protecting the female juvenile.

Neglect by criminologists in not acknowledging female issues is common. Chesney-Lind discusses "monosexism", as that which has

> permitted and encouraged general theory building and
>
> research that is profoundly flawed....It is not too much
>
> to say that any theory or theories of deviance which fail
>
> to account for the behavior (either conforming or rule
>
> violating) of over half of the population cannot, in the
>
> final analysis, be considered sound (Chesney-Lind, 1983: 1).

## Violence and Female Delinquency

Chesney-Lind has conducted extensive research in the area of female delinquency. As it has been a course left unchartered. Her research into this area has shattered some of the closely held myths relative to the female juvenile offender. She found that no systematic examination has been made with regard not only to the nature of female delinquency, but also the character of the official response to this group.

> While young women are less likely than males to
>
> act out aggressively, this does not mean that violence
>
> and aggression do not play a substantial, though indi-
>
> rect, role in the generation of female delinquency
>
> (Chesney-Lind, 1983-33)

The rate of violent crimes of females under 18 rose dramatically during the 60s and early 70s (419.2%) and continues to escalate, at a somewhat slower pace (approximately 218% in 1996), today.

Many authors, until recently ignored much of the misconduct of juvenile females, if they behaved in a traditional female manner. Some suggest that changes in the behavior of both the police and the female could be the greatest contributing factor in the number arrests of juvenile women. Gender appears to be an influence on not only police officers, but other professionals in the criminal justice.

Gender is an important factor in the minds of social workers, and court officials whether or not they are aware of it, and that their attitudes and opinions do contribute significantly to the differential perception and treatment of young males and females by our welfare and juvenile justice.

The behavior of females entering the criminal justice system appears to be either different, or they elicit different behavior from systems agents, than their male counterparts. This may be due to a sexual double standard, paternalism, or the chivalry factor.

The more restrictive social roles which are inherent to females may be the key to the low rate of violent crimes committed by female juveniles. There is usually greater control and supervision exerted over girls by parents and other authorities.

The juvenile justice system often maintains a highly protective attitude toward female offenders. Since there are fewer female offenders, fewer programs are designed to serve them; therefore, the dispositional alternatives are limited.

The lack of attention and alternatives for female juveniles and the implication that the juvenile justice system is adequately "treating" these individuals is of no minor import.

> Criminologists' failure to address the issue of women
>
> and crime has seriously hampered efforts to understand
>
> not only why, when, and how women deviate or commit

Delinquent offenses, but the equally important questions

of why, when, and how the society responds to this behav

ior (Chesney-Lind, 1983:1).

Indeed, it seems obvious that sexism exists in the juvenile justice system and this creates policy implications which limit opportunities afforded to females. The power of parens patrae, or benevolent care, must be offered to young females or discarded and other doctrines will need to be sought for replacements.

There are existent social factors which have allowed for numerous theories of female delinquency to be developed. Broken homes, lack of supervision, substance abuse, and physical and emotional abuse have been postulates of female delinquency.

Social class has been emphasized as a factor in female delinquency: lower class breeds crime; expectations are higher for girls' behavior.

The increase in single parent homes during the last two decades create a virtual bottomless pit from which to theorize. The family itself has always possessed a double standard for evaluating male and female behavior.

The Western family is female centered, delinquency in a boy is a protest against this structure, as well as the outcome of the boy's difficulty in finding someone with whom he can identify. A girl is thought by some authors to have a more favorable opportunity for emotional maturing, because she has her mother before her and can identify with the functions of a housewife and mother. Therefore, delinquency or conflict in females is ignored, as is any changing status of females; the personality of the mother is ignored, and often the absence of the father; most importantly, the development of the female herself is not a factor. This lack of acknowledgment of female response seriously limits those authors' contributions to the field.

Violence for adolescent females is often a cheap form of excitement and, in turn, that excitement becomes a cheap form of gratification. Females fight and rob with frequency, but are less likely to commit murder than males. While females should kill out of desperation, due to their lack of independence and mobility, they do not often do so.

While less likely to do so, there is evidence of some very violent females who commit murder. While the frequency of murders was less for girls, they were often quite brutal in their attacks. Knives were used more often by females than males and, while no more lethal than guns (the males' preference), knives can be used in a method that is both savage and disfiguring.

Females exhibit diverse behavior along racial subsets. Juvenile African-American females commit more robberies and simple assaults. However, White girls start their criminal careers earlier--age 14 for serious crimes, as opposed to age 16 for African-American girls.

Peer associations also play a dominant role in the aggressive and violent behavior of adolescent

girls. Violent girls must be seen in terms of their peers, who are not deviant but have taken on certain values and norms. This assumption is the usual reaction to the shock of females as criminals--those who suffer from personal maladjustment.

Peer associations must be given a role in understanding the changing patterns of delinquency with girls. Delinquent acts occur with the greatest frequency in a mixed-sex group. Girls seem to learn delinquent behavior from boys, although other girls seem to form the most important reference group. The premise of the increasingly violent adolescent female has been rejected by many, who have insisted that there is no increase in the level of violence in these girls.

Do adolescent females conform to the norm or are they as aggressive and nonconforming as their male counterparts?

Some would say that girls are not more compliant, conforming, or suggestible than boys; some argue that girls are "trained" to be less aggressive.

Girls have been conditioned to express aggression only

in a few acceptable forms. One of these would be fantasy

...girls more clearly see television as fantasy and thus can

express their aggressions through viewing television vio-

lence. Boys, on the other hand, see television as more

realistic, so the modeling effect dominates for them. It

is well known that young girls have greater verbal fluency,

read better, and are better able to fantasize than boys.

Recent research by Singer(1972) has revealed that children

do not learn aggression by viewing aggressive acts if they

have been trained to distinguish reality from fantasy. Thus,

if our theorizing is correct, one would expect girls to be

able to distinguish reality from fantasy in television pro-

grams better than boys could. Assuming that girls who

Think that television is realistic would be poor fantasizers,

one would expect to find such girls in the higher aggres-

ion groups....It is suggested that this was due to the lack

of aggressive female models on television and to the

socialization practices that train most girls to be non-

aggressive and to express aggression in fantasy (Lefko-

witz, 1977: 123).

While there may be no universal agreement on the level of aggressiveness and violence that female delinquents display, there does exist a very real number of violent female youth.

## Treatment of the Violent Offender

For over a decade most police departments across

the country have treated all juvenile offenders, serious

or not, in a similar manner....The emphasis in juvenile

justice has been on diversion and rehabilitation, rather

than on justice or concern with the victim (Pindur and

Wells, 1985: 16-17).


If we can take the first-time minor offender and pre-

vent him or her from committing even more serious

offenses, we will have gone a long way toward con-

trolling our problem with violent offenders. In the

same vein, however....some youthful offenders must

be removed from their communities for society's

sake as well as their own. The secure incarceration

of youthful offenders should be reserved for those

youths who commit serious, violent offenses and

cannot be handled by other alternatives (Congress-

ional Record, 1980).

Most criminologists would agree that since a small number of predators are responsible for a large volume of crime, that the future depends on those factors that will initiate, interrupt, or end their careers.

A variety of programs have been initiated for this purpose. While most program alternatives for violent offenders tend to focus on a positive approach, there are those which are geared to rehabilitation. One such alternative is restitution. This exists as a promising arena for the restoration of community losses and the assumption of accountability and responsibility by the offender.

However, as critics point out, there is no evidence to support violent crime deterrence or rehabilitation theories and that there exists no predictable effective treatment for the violent offender. Yet, dangerousness is difficult to diagnose. Therefore, if we cannot reliable predict violent behavior, haw can we justify our continued detention of juveniles evaluated as violent? Can the use of unreliable techniques be professionally and ethically justified?

The detention of juveniles comprises the major allocation of resources in the juvenile justice system. Both status offenders and serious, often violent, offenders are frequently detained by juvenile court judges.

Females in juvenile institutions were two to three times more likely than males to be committed for status offenses than males. It can, therefore, be argued that there is an appreciable population of youthful offenders, including females, with which the juvenile justice system must deal.

The majority of the states have vague juvenile codes, thereby creating a high level of discretion for the judiciary. Implementation of policies is, therefore, difficult and fragmented at best. This dilemma has been dubbed "the non-system of juvenile justice".

With the flexibility given to administrators, there exists the option for independent action, innovation, and progressive reform. This is somewhat deceptive, however. If there is not an adequate procedure for processing information, the administrator has no means for structuring or implementing meaningful change and/or programs. A broad continuum of programs and punishments for juveniles exist, ranging from long-term incarceration to community prevention programs.

Jeremy Bentham, a criminologist in the early 1900s, felt children were too young to face consequences or to appreciate events which might occur sometime in the future. Therefore, Bentham (1948:284) concluded that "...punishment could produce little effect in influencing juvenile conduct".

Conversely, Kant (1930: 88-89) placed great emphasis on discipline and physical punishment, acting as supplements to the insufficiency of moral punishment.

It should therefore be no surprise that criminologists 40-60 years later still have no "surefire" answer to treatment for juveniles and still argue from the Bentham or Kant foundation.

This researcher offers the following: Serious juvenile offenders should be held accountable by

the courts by focusing on the disposition of serious, chronic, or violent juvenile offenders. These dispositions should be proportionate to the injury done and the culpability of the juvenile and to the prior record of adjudication, if any. The primary goal of the juvenile court should be rehabilitation, general deterrence, general prevention, and the strengthening of social institutions such as families, schools, and community organizations. If treatment in the juvenile court system does not appear to be appropriate for the individual, then other methods should be sought. Methods of treating serious offenders, therefore, need to have further research. Research and evaluation on the treatment of serious, chronic, or violent juvenile offenders should be continued with emphasis on rehabilitation, accountability, and public safety. Programs should be developed which examine what variations in treatment work best with which types of youth and in what settings.

Since there are fewer violent female juvenile offenders there are fewer programs designed to serve them and alternatives may be more limited. Most administrators will place their resources in offerings for the larger population. Consequently, most juvenile court jurisdictions offer more programs for boys than for girls.

In considerations of the delinquent girl, the entire field of law enforcement and corrections must be included. Further, the entire system is in great need of innovative treatment programs, among which are community-based programs; educational, academic, and vocational training; well-trained staff; adequate funding; and an educated press and public. They found that there is an increasing number of girls that are more aggressive and anti-social and that because of this group, additional emphasis will need to be placed on programs to address their needs.

## Expected Relationships

Crimes are categorized by the U. S. Department of Justice into two major groups: Index and Other Crimes. Index Crimes include eight major offenses: Criminal Homicide, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny-Theft, Auto Theft, and Arson. Furthermore, juvenile justice systems utilize more specific categories for youth: Status and Non-Status offenses. Status offenses are those which, if committed by an adult would not be considered a crime (i.e., truancy, runaway). Non-status offenses include all other crimes, both violent and non-violent. This researcher studied only crimes of violence.

It is a widely held opinion that males are more aggressive, and therefore, more violent than females. From play as small children, boys are typically involved in games of physical strength, or "mock war", playing with guns; while girls are engaged in traditionally feminine, or domestic, activities, such as playing with dolls, or playing house.

Individuals tend to form liaisons with others and interact in that capacity. Researchers have documented delinquent behavior as a group activity. In addition, as the number of accomplices increases, so does the risk of being caught. Many believe that acts of violence by female juveniles don't occur without an accomplice; furthermore, there would most often be a group of juveniles in the activity, and that the presence of a male accomplice would dominate a high percentage of violent crime incidences involving a female juvenile.

The relationship between Whites and minority groups remains tenuous, at best. The passage of civil rights legislation in the 60s has somewhat improved the status of minorities, particularly in public school and work place settings. However, there are still outbreaks of violence between African-Americans and Whites, and, most recently, increases in gang activities between Whites and Hispanics (in the Los Angeles area).

Crimes, especially violent ones, are most often credited, by the predominantly White judicial system, to minority groups. A greater percentage of these minorities are poor; poor people are most often those ingrained in illegal activities--at least, the poor are the most often apprehended. This stereotype, in turn, perpetuates racial inequality.

The younger the girl, the less likely she would be to engage in violent activity. This is due, in part, to the lack of accessibility to activities for the younger girl. The younger she is, the more apt she is to have closer supervision, even if it is offered by an older sibling. She will, due to her age and size, draw more attention to herself if she is engaging in criminal activities. There would be a greater tendency to commit more serious crimes with greater frequency as she approached the age of majority. The trauma of involvement in the juvenile justice systems may also decrease as age increases. Male juveniles follow the same pattern.

The violent female juvenile and the stability of the family unit is very important. The rate and seriousness of criminal activity among youth is in direct correlation to the presence, or absence, of parental influence. Crime rates among youth is related to the presence, or absence, of parental influence. Crime rates among youth are the highest among youth from broken homes-- single parent families. In addition, the incidence of crime is greatest in homes where the father (or other male figure) was absent. The male head-of-household is usually perceived as the authoritarian, meting out discipline and enforcing rules. The usual logic applied is that if the rule-maker/enforcer is absent, discipline would be lacking, thereby creating an atmosphere for crime to flourish.

School attendance is a significant factor in the occurrence of violent crimes committed by female juveniles. Success, or ability to "get along" is often equated with status, most certainly among peers. Youth who have withdrawn, or have been expelled from school, are usually categorized as those most likely to be chronic offenders.

An inability to follow the rules at school, an aimless wandering, too much idle time, and "making trouble" are frequently the terminologies utilized for youth who, failing academic expectations, turn to a "life of crime".

Employment is also a factor in the rate of commission of violent crimes by female juveniles. Employment status equates most directly to social status. Crime and violence could occur as a means of survival for these youth. Since the perception of the unemployed is one in which "idle hands lead to idle play", it would be assumed that female juveniles without employment (and perhaps, as a compounding factor, also not attending school) would constitute the serious offenders group.

Another possible factor is the number and type of prior referrals to the juvenile court and the rate of violent crimes. Repeated appearances in juvenile court may result in negative reinforcement. As a girl gets the reputation of being "mean" and "always in trouble", she

begins to fulfill the expectations for that behavior--she reflects "being bad". These expectations also pose a challenge to the girl to do something that will surpass the last delinquent act for which she had to appear in court. The progression from the stages of "bad to worse" may occur frequently, therefore, the offenses are likely to become more serious.

A related expectation is that a prior history of abuse and/or neglect would be a dominant factor in the commission of violent crimes in the commission of violent crimes by females. It has been generally theorized that abuse and neglect accelerate feelings of aggressiveness into acts of violence. Anger and frustration, as well as the lack of positive attention to the young person, is assumed to manifest violence against others. It is commonly believed that abuse is "passed on" from generation to generation. If abuse was suffered by females, it could have a significant impact on their behavior. The same premise could be held for males.

As the juvenile justice system often exhibits sexual bias, juvenile court judges are apt to render dispositions with little regard for parity. Females need to be quickly discouraged from any future criminal activity. Therefore, dispositions for violent female offenders are assumed to be more harsh than those which their male counterparts receive.

Additionally, recidivism (return to the justice system) would presumably be less likely to occur with violent males as they are offered a wider array of program alternatives. These are designed to both rehabilitate the offender and interrupt the "life of crime" cycle.

Data was collected on a sample (88) of violent male juvenile offenders (at the Clark County Juvenile Court Services in Las Vegas, NV for the 1996 calendar year) so that differences and/or similarities could be noted. In addition, a review was conducted of the programs and alternatives and/or any other accommodations which were provided by the juvenile justice system for violent juveniles during that year.

One hundred and twenty-nine subjects for this study were taken as the total number of female adolescents during this calendar year. Each subject was measured by the following set of variables: sex; age; race; family unit; school enrollment and employment status; number of prior referrals to the juvenile justice system; sexual and physical abuse; neglect; offenses of status, against property and against person(s); the current referral charge; number and sex of accomplices; dispositional status; and program referral status.

Clearly these are two separate issues which must be reconciled if we are to understand the impact of decisions which are made by the juvenile justice system in attempting to prevent adolescents from entering, or returning to, this system:

1. The availability of program modalities structured to handle a violent female population, and

2. The appropriateness of referral placements and completion of these programs.

The second objective, program participation, bears additional implications for juvenile justice administrators: structured case management services and systematic data collection during the offender's interaction with the juvenile court services are necessary elements for program treatment success.

Case management might include diagnostic assessment, the use of treatment performance

contracts, the involvement of youth and family, referral for treatment interventions, the monitoring of in-residence treatment process and community placements, and program termination.

Systematic data collection could include tracking and detailed analysis of the offender from initial booking through release (either dismissal or completion of a treatment alternative); complete familial history; school attendance records; employment history; complete familial history; school attendance records; employment history; complete record of all prior arrests; and, follow-up in the adult court services for the purpose of both early prediction and prevention of violence.

Data showed that the actual number of truly violent female offenses (those against persons) is lower than thought. Assault and Battery (fistfights) are common among all teenagers.

Male offenders committed more acts of robbery and rape. The belief that sexual assault may be a more highly aggressive offense than other violent crimes depends on the individual's perception of violence itself.

Another finding was that females committed acts of violence singularly in the majority of offenses. When there was an accomplice present, it was rarely a male.

Race was found to be significant inasmuch as there was a disproportionate amount of non-Whites in the study. Non-Whites constituted 44.2% of the referrals for violent offenses to the juvenile court services, while comprising only 5% of the local population.

Age was of significant interest as violent offenses increased for females until age 15 when a gradual decrease was noted. Offenses by males, on the other hand, increased steadily, peaking at age 18--the terminal age for referral to the juvenile justice system.

School enrollment did not appear to have any significance in deterring crime. Rather, this variable was of importance due to the overwhelming number of violent offenders, who did attend school--four-fifths of the female subjects and two-thirds of the male subjects. Employment, whether coupled or not with school attendance, played a nearly imperceptible role in the career of these offenders. It might be argued that if more of the subjects had been employed, fewer of them would have had the time, or inclination, to participate in criminal activities. The limited time for this study prevented eliciting this information.

Another finding was that prior referrals to the juvenile court system had a high level of significance. Recidivism was likely and there was some indication that there was progression from nonviolent to violent offenses. This is noteworthy, as this progression has not been indicted in prior research.

Dispositions were expected to be harsher for females, due, in part, to the chivalrous attitude of the juvenile justice system toward them; chivalrous, that is, in the sense of protecting the female by detaining and/or punishing her. This researcher found that this was not the case; indeed, males were twice as likely as females to receive harsher punishment.

Finally, the lack of referrals for female offenders to programs and/or alternatives reached significance. As expected, males were more likely to be required to complete a program as part

of the disposition of the case. Females were referred to alternative follow-up services infrequently. However, the observation that over half of the violent females had their cases dismissed may well have been a distinct factor in the low number of referrals.

In addition, the juvenile justice system may well consider court appearances and treatment referral programs inappropriate for those juvenile offenders, regardless of gender, who engage in fist fights.

Indeed, the question of whether any juvenile should appear in court for an activity as insignificant as a fist fight must be addressed by juvenile court services administrators. Assault and Battery charges which are described are "adolescent fist fights" should come into the purview of the court, for treatment and/or punishment; only when:

a) the behavior is repetitive, or

b) the attack involves a weapon.

Court resources could be better directed to the individuals who commit truly violent crimes.

With this exception, it is this researcher's contention that a single act of violence would merit a treatment intervention. Whether that intervention be intensive counseling, or a more formalized program referral, would depend on the nature of the offense and the history of the offender.

The variables which did not reach significance were:

1. The presence of an intact family unit;

2. Sexual abuse;

3. Physical abuse; and

4. Neglect.

This researcher found that violent females were as apt to be from intact family units as from single family environments. A possible explanation was that the "quality, rather than the quantity", of home life was of primary importance in the behavior of adolescents.

Sexual abuse, interestingly, had a minuscule amount of significance on the rate of violent crime commission. While expected to also reach significance, neither physical abuse nor neglect were found to do so. It was suspected that the small number of neglect and abuse cases was due to an absence of formal reporting of such, rather than the absence of actual incidents. Again, no further assessment can be made due to the time limitations of this study.

Therefore, this author would submit some recommendations for future research.

Further study occur on the issue of race, particularly as there appears to be a disproportionate amount of non-Whites referred to the juvenile court services. While it appears that few females of any race are referred to program alternatives, this area also needs closer scrutiny.

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Further testing should be conducted to assess, by in-depth studies (perhaps self-report data), the influence which multiple sociological factors, which assumed little significance in this study, might have on the violent female juvenile offender.

The possible contributory factors which should be included are:

1. Other delinquent siblings

2. Impact of the total family unit

3. Abuse and neglect history

It would seem advantageous to also assess the quality of family life and not just the structure of the family unit in further observations.

Some concentration should be focused on evaluations of those programs which have been initiated in other areas of the United States. This researcher finds of promising merit, perhaps because of the uniqueness, the "wilderness" programs. The removal of violent females from their current environment should also suffice in creating an atmosphere conducive, or receptive, for change in occur. The California Department of Youth Authority, for example, notes that wilderness programs have shown a positive impact on recidivism. While only citing this single program, and with no findings to substantiate its success, it appears appealing enough for further consideration as an element of the juvenile justice treatment continuum.

The assessment of treatment effectiveness has proven historically elusive. Definitive research or evaluation findings result only from carefully controlled studies that attend to specific assumptions, appropriate research design and sampling, and analytic methods which are powerful and discriminating enough to measure both incremental and total effects. Many evaluations tend to incorporate poor methodology and analysis when attempting to prove treatment effectiveness. The primary consideration of program evaluation is often to "protect administrative turf and resources".

The juvenile justice system thus finds itself at a decision point in determining the types of policies and interventions best suited for violent female offenders. At issue is whether dispositions for this subset of the delinquent population shall focus on rehabilitation and treatment or on punishment, accountability, and community protection. The issue may be resolved on the basis of whether reasonable alternatives for these youth can be developed. There is growing evidence that some few program alternatives can effectively work with the violent female offender within the structure of the juvenile court, while also providing for community safety and the public's demand for punishment.

To believe that the incorporation of these programs would then serve as a panacea for curing the ills of this research group is too lofty and unrealistic. As Schur's words remind us:

...a totally problemless society doesn't exist. Societies,

virtually by definition, exhibit behavioral norms and violation

of these norms...it is by the violation and the social reaction

to them that members of the society maintain an adequate

sense of what the norms are (Schur, 1973: 7-8).

However, an attempt must be made to close the cracks, by providing resources to, and program offerings for, those few females who constitute the group behaving as violent juvenile offenders.

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# The Female Gang Member

## INTRODUCTION

It is rare for researchers to have large national samples pf the confined females, just as it is rarer to find large samples of female gang members. Project GANGFACT was able to collect data in 17 states and surveyed over 1,000 females in custody. The female gang sample developed in the present research is more than sufficient in size to begin systematically testing a number of concepts that others have only had the opportunity to theorize about.

The information that will follow examines gender differences among gang members. In this analysis the goal is to ascertain the commonalities and differences with regard to gender among those who are self-reported gang members. This is the basic comparison of the female gang member and the male gang member on a wide range of variables.

The next part undertakes the analysis of comparing gang members and non-gang members within the female confined population. This is the basic comparison of female non-gang members and female gang members.

## PART 1: COMPARING MALE GANG MEMBERS WITH FEMALE GANG MEMBERS

In this section the analysis involves only those who are self-reported gang members. These are persons who have at one time in their life "joined a gang". Non-gang members are not included in this analysis. The analysis compares male gang members to female gang members.

### Non-Significant Differences In Comparing Male Gang Members And Female Gang Members

Most of the comparisons between male gang members and female gang members were not statistically significant. This means that in most regards, male and female gang members are similar. As there are a large number of these factors, we have grouped these into three general categories: 1. Beliefs and Attitudes, 2. Behavior and Background Variables, and 3. Gang Life Variables.

### 1. Beliefs and Attitudes

There was no significant difference between male and female gang members on the following measures of beliefs and attitudes:

- Whether they believe they will be able to find a good job and eventually support a family.
- Whether they support or reject the notion that "I get what I want even if I have to take it from someone".
- Whether they believe that bullying in school can lead to gangbanging.
- Whether they feel it is "all right to demand that my needs be met".
- Whether they do or do not feel that "I am not part of legitimate opportunities in my city or town and am cut out of good possibilities" (i.e., the belief about being a part of the underclass).
- Whether it has been harder, easier, or about the same since March of 1994 to buy illegal guns.
- Whether they think shooting at a police officer would bring heat on their gang or whether it would bring them status and rep.
- Whether the meaning of their nickname is based on physical or behavioral characteristics, a "take off on given", or other meaning.
- Whether or not any of their parents have ever served time in prison.
- Whether or not they report that their parent(s) were physically violent in their home.
- Whether or not they report that their parent(s) knew where they were and who they were with

## 2. Behavior and Background Factors

There was no significant difference between male and female gang members on the following measures of behavior and experiential background factors:
- Whether they ever bullied anyone in school.
- Whether they rarely or regularly attend church.
- Whether they are or are not careful to avoid activities in which they might be injured.
- Whether they have or have not ever sold crack cocaine.
- Whether they have or have not completed high school or obtained their GED.
- Whether or not they have ever been involved in organized drug dealing.
- Whether they have had any disciplinary reports while in custody.
- Whether or not they have started a fight or attacked someone while in custody.
- Whether or not they have carried a homemade weapon (knife, etc.) while in custody.
- Whether or not they have threatened any facility staff member or officer while in custody.
- Whether or not they have tried to smuggle in any illegal drugs while in custody.

## 3. Gang Life Variables

There was no significant difference between male and female gang members on the following measures about gang life:

- Whether they think gangs can be put out of business if they were investigated and prosecuted like organized crime groups.
- How many of their close friends and associates are gang members.
- Whether they are still a current member of a gang.
- Whether they have ever attempted to quit the gang.
- Whether or not their gang has written rules for its members.
- Whether or not their gang has older adult leaders who have been in the gang for many years.
- Whether or not they have ever committed a crime for financial gain with their gang.
- Whether or not their gang holds regular weekly meetings.
- Whether or not their gang requires its members to pay regular weekly dues.
- Whether or not the chance to make money was important in their decision to join a gang.
- Whether they would quit the gang if they had a true "second chance" to start their lives over.
- Whether they think they would have still joined a gang if there had been youth activities available to them (for example: sports, music, art, drama, YMCA, Boys' Club, church activities, etc).
- Whether their gang is racially homogeneous or heterogeneous with regard to race and ethnicity.
- Whether their gang has ever sold crack cocaine.
- Whether or not there parents know the are gang members.
- Whether they report their gang has established any relationship with real organized crime groups.
- Whether they think their gang has kept the promise(s) it made to them when they first joined.
- Whether they report that the gangs that exist inside correctional institutions are basically the same gangs that exist on the street.
- Whether they think they will ever be the top leader of their gang.
- Whether or not gang membership has affected their religious beliefs in any way.
- Whether or not they feel that the gang, which they belong to, is aiding to their race or ethnic group to overcome society's prejudices.
- Whether or not anyone in their gang (i.e., leaders, etc) has ever told them to perform an act that they felt was wrong.
- Whether or not their father encouraged them to join a gang.
- Whether or not their mother encouraged them to join a gang.
- Whether or not their parents would be embarrassed to learn they were in a gang.
- Whether or not they joined a gang because they knew someone that was a member of a gang (for instance a friend, a brother, or an uncle).
- Whether or not they think they could quit the gang if they wanted to.
- Whether or not they feel protected and loved by being in a gang.

- Whether or not they believe that in their neighborhood gang fighting is normal behavior.
- Whether or not they felt that their school did not take it too seriously when they got involved in drugs, guns, and gangs.
- Whether or not they know of any gang members of the law enforcement community who are active gang members.
- Whether or not they think that early intervention in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade could help discourage children from joining gangs.
- Whether or not they report that gangs use religion as a front in order to conduct gang business in the institutions they are locked up in.
- Whether or not they report that gangs seek to influence staff members to bring in drugs/contraband.
- Whether or not they have ever used legal letters to communicate with fellow gang members.
- Whether or not they think that a zero tolerance approach to gang activity within a correctional facility affects gang recruitment.
- Whether or not they report that there is a connection between adult prison gangs and juvenile institutional gangs.

Thus, on a large number of attitudinal, behavioral, and gang life variables (as detailed above) there were no significant differences on these factors comparing male gang members with female gang members.

## PART 2: COMPARING FEMALE NON-GANG MEMBERS WITH FEMALE GANG MEMBERS

This type of analysis is useful in the present research because of the large sample size of incarcerated females. Over a thousand females are represented in this confined offender national sample from 17 different states. It is within this female inmate population that we can now compare the female gang member with the female non-gang member.

### Non-Significant Differences In Comparing Female Non-Gang Members And Female Gang Members

There were several factors that were not significant in comparing female non-gang members with female gang members. These include the (1) beliefs and attitudes, and (2) behavior and experiential background factors. These non-significant differences are summarized below.

### Beliefs and Attitudes

Several variables measuring beliefs and attitudes were not significant in the test comparing female non-gang members with female gang members. Among these variables for which no significant differences emerged were the following:

- Believing that they would find a good job and eventually be able to support a family.
- Whether they think that bullying in school can lead to gangbanging.

- Whether they think that most gang members get arrested for the crimes they committed for their gang or for crimes they committed for themselves.
- Whether or not they feel they are a part of the legitimate opportunities in their city or town or are cut out of good possibilities (i.e., the underclass question).
- Whether or not they think that early intervention in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade could help discourage children from joining gangs.

## Behavior and Experiential Background Factors

Several variables measuring behavioral and experiential or background factors were not significant in comparing female gang members with female non-gang members. Included in this list were the following findings:
- Whether they were ever "bullied" by anyone in school.
- Whether they were ever forced to have sex that they did not want to have.
- Whether or not in their conversations with parent(s), the parent(s) often showed favorable attitudes toward drugs, crime, and violence.
- Whether or not their school did not take it too seriously when they got involved in drugs, guns, and gangs.
- Whether or not their parent(s) took time to come and meet their teachers when they were in school.
- Whether or not the parent(s) were physically violent in the home.

We can now summarize those variables that were significant in comparing male gang members with female gang members.

Female gang members were significantly less likely than male gang members to:
- be 18 years of age or older (i.e., adults)
- believe most gang members get arrested for crimes they commit themselves.
- have fired a gun at a police officer.
- have held rank or any leadership position in the gang.
- report that they do what they want to regardless of what the gang expects them to do.
- claim that seeking protection was not important in their decision to join a gang.
- have volunteered to join the gang.
- disagree with the idea that parental conversations were favorable towards drugs, crime, and violence.
- report being in a physical fight with anyone while incarcerated.
- report being in fights with rival gang members while incarcerated.

Female gang members were significantly more likely than male gang members to:
- be bullied by someone in school.
- have been forced to have sex they did not want to have.
- stop committing violent rimes if they were juveniles tried as adults.

- claim they do not believe in God.
- claim they are on Satan's side, not God's side.
- claim that their involvement in organized drug dealing was something they did for their gang, not for their personal benefit.
- report their gang has a special language code.
- believe that some outside person/organization or force controls the actions of their gang.
- report they joined the gang while incarcerated.
- make false "911" calls in connection with their gang activities.
- report that they have personally met face-to-face with the top leader of their gang.
- report they got their gang nicknames before being locked up.
- report that they have known males in their gang who forced females to have sex.

The comparison of female gang members with females who were not gang members produced a number of significant differences. These are summarized in terms of "attitudes", "family life", and "behavior" below.

### Attitudes and Beliefs:
- Gang members had a higher percentage who asserted that they always get what they want even if they have to take it from someone.
- Gang members had a higher percentage who are never careful to avoid activities in which they might be injured.
- Gang members had a higher percentage who always want to demand that their needs be met.
- Gang members believed that it has been easier since the Brady bill to get illegal guns.
- Gang members were less likely to be deterred as a juvenile from committing a crime of violence if juveniles were tried as adults.
- Gang members were less likely to see the suppression value of prosecuting gangs as organized crime groups.
- Gang members were less likely to believe in God.
- Gang members were more likely to claim they were on Satan's side.
- Gang members were more likely to report that gangs use religion as a front for their operations inside a correctional institution.
- Gang members were less likely to believe that a zero-tolerance approach within a correctional facility would affect gang recruitment.
- Gang members were more likely to believe that a connection exists between adult prison gangs and juvenile institutional gangs.

### Family Life:
- Gang members were more likely to have a father-only family (father, myself, and siblings).
- Gang members were more likely to report having a parent who served time in prison.

> Gang members were more likely to report parents who rarely or never knew where they were or who they were with.

## Behavior:

> Gang members were more than likely to be a bully in school.
> Gang members were less likely to attend church regularly.
> Gang members were more likely to have sold crack cocaine.
> Gang members were less likely to have completed high school or get a GED.
> Gang members were more likely to have fired a gun at a police officer.
> Gang members were more likely to be involved in organized drug dealing.
> Gang members were more likely to have "5" or more close friends and associates who are gang members.
> Gang members were more likely to get disciplinary reports inside the correctional institution.
> Gang members were more likely to be in a physical fight while inside a correctional institution.
> Gang members were more likely to start a fight or attack someone while inside the correctional institution.
> Gang members were more likely to threaten correctional staff or officers while inside the correctional institution.
> Gang members were more likely to attempt to smuggle in illegal drugs while inside the correctional institution.
> Gang members were more likely to be in the juvenile category (i.e., 17 years of age or under).

## Conclusion:

Female gang members are younger, less violent (but that is starting to change), more compliant with gang rules as well as more likely to be recruited and to join a gang for the purpose of protection. Females are also more likely to have been sexually exploited and bullied at school. Lastly, girls may be more affected by legal sanctions. The comparison of female gang members to non-members revealed many similarities but some significant differences. Gang members were more assertive, less religious, less affected by the legal sanctions. Gang member's families were more disrupted and less involved with their adolescent members. Gang members also started more fights, carried more weapons, threatened correctional officers and attempted more illegal drug smuggling.