THE HISTORY OF VANCOUVER

YOUTH GANGS: 1900 - 1985

by

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ABSTRACT

Youth gangs have recently emerged as a social problem of considerable magnitude in Canada generally, and Vancouver more specifically. Despite their status as objects of media, law enforcement and public attention, little in the way of academic research has been conducted on youth gangs. This thesis explores the history of youth gangs in Vancouver as recorded in reports of gang activity in "The Province" newspaper from 1900 to 1985. Three "waves" of gang activity are identified: the "Corner Lounger Gangs" period (1924 to 1931); the "Zoot Suit and Hoodlum Gangs" period (1944 to 1959); and the "Park Gangs, Fascist Gangs and Politics" period (1959 to 1975). The most recent surge in gang activity is also identified and covers the period from 1973 to 1985. The activities of these gangs are described in detail as are the explanations offered to account for them.

The number of gang-related articles was used as an indicator of actual gang activity. Two hypotheses emerging from both a review of gang-related articles in "The Province" and the literature were identified and then tested to see if they could account for increases in reports of gangs. The identified hypotheses included the impact of inward migration into urban areas and unemployment as significant factors leading to increased gang activity.

The results indicate that there is a slight positive relationship between inward migration and increases in gang activity whereas the unemployment hypothesis proved to be inversely related. In addition, the various explanations on the causes of youth gangs appearing in "The Province" indicate that the impact of theoretical formulations on the phenomenon of gangs on lay interpretations is minimal. Future research on youth gangs in Vancouver is encouraged and several possible avenues of research are discussed. It appears that a multiple causal model is required if we are to understand why gangs form, why they persist and why they disband.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Within the past decade, the phenomenon of youth gangs in
Vancouver, British Columbia, and Canada more generally, has
emerged as a significant social problem. Not surprisingly,
much of the interest generated in the topic is manifested in
the print media. Gang related articles in Canadian newspapers
increased from a few per year in the early 1980s to a zenith
of 90 in 1989 and have stabilized at an approximate average of
30 per year since then (Canadian News Index, 1982-1992). As
Girrard (1992) notes, media attention to youth gangs in B.C.
surged in 1985 following the murder of Jimmy and Lily Ming by
an Asian gang when the gang's extortion demand of $700,000
could not be met.[1] An interest in youth gangs on the part of
the media has remained reasonably constant ever since.

Despite this increase in media interest in youth gangs,
we know little, either currently or historically, about how
and why Canadian youth gangs form, what kinds of people join
them, what activities they participate in, whether or not they
have an identifiable subculture and what factors lead to their
demise. Moreover, we do not know if gangs, and gang
activities, wax and wane over time and whether there are any
identifiable characteristics shared by gangs historically.

This thesis addresses these gaps in knowledge by
providing a socio-historical analysis of youth gang activity
in the city of Vancouver B.C. for the period between 1900 and
1985. This task was accomplished after an examination of each
daily edition of "The Province" newspaper and an
identification and reading of youth gang related articles.

Chapter II contains a review of the literature on youth
gangs and deals primarily with the question of what factors
lead to the formation, continuation and demise of gangs. The
analysis begins with a discussion on the term "youth gang".
Working definitions which were used for the thesis research
are next delineated. The review then identifies the salient
research and theoretical propositions on youth gangs in a
chronological order beginning with the work of Thrasher
(1936) and ending with that of Vigil (1988). Due to the
absence of research on the topic from the Canadian
perspective, research from Great Britain and the United States
are considered in this discussion. A summary of the major
contributions to youth gang theory is set out and attached in
Appendix A.

Chapter III provides an analysis of youth gangs and youth
gang activity in Vancouver for the period between 1900 and
1985. The method used to collect the data for this period
involved a content analysis of "The Province" newspaper. A

detailed account of the method is set out in Appendix B. The data indicate that, historically, Vancouver has experienced waves of youth gangs and youth gang activity that can be arranged into four periods: the period of "Corner Lounger Gangs" from 1924-1931; the "Zoot Suit and Hoodlum Gangs" period from 1944-1959; the "Park Gangs, Fascist Gangs and Politics" period from 1959-1975; and "Post Wave III Developments" period from 1973-1985. The chapter includes a description of the various characteristics, attributes and activities of youth gangs as they appeared in newspaper reports.

The objective of Chapter IV is twofold. First, it extends the analysis in Chapter III by analyzing the popular explanations that purported to account for youth gangs during each period and at the time the gangs were active. Second, two factors that have been identified as the causes of gang emergence are tested. The independent variables of inward migration and unemployment espoused by Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992) are analyzed with respect to their impact on reported increases in youth gang activity. Finally, on page 103 a hypothesis is delineated which identifies inward migration and unemployment as possible factors to account for the historical presence of youth gangs in Vancouver and their wave-like nature.

The thesis concludes with a brief summary of the history of gangs in Vancouver and a discussion of the results obtained from the analyses set out in Chapter IV. As well, the implications of the research results are discussed as they relate to the refutation of the theoretical propositions espoused by Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992). The implications for future research on the topic of gangs are also discussed and possible avenues of study are identified.

NOTES

1. For more information see: Jiwa, Salim (1985). Murderers
    answer mercy plea. <u>The Province</u>. March,12 p.4. Also,
    see Dubro (1992) for more information on the rise of
    Asian organized crime gangs in Vancouver in the 1970s and
    1980s.

CHAPTER II

THE APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF YOUTH GANGS:

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter explores the most salient theoretical formulations that have been offered as explanations for the phenomenon of youth gangs. Unfortunately, there is a paucity of research on youth gangs in Canada and, consequently, the majority of these explanations originate in the United States. The chapter also includes a consideration of the contributions of scholars from other countries. A review of the literature demonstrates that there is no single theory that explains the episodic appearance and disappearance of youth gangs. Rather, as Spergel (1990) indicates, a multi-variate causal model may better explain the phenomenon.

Definitions:

For the purposes of the present study, a "youth gang" will be defined as,

> "...any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who (a)
> are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by
> others in the neighbourhood, (b) recognize themselves as
> a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name),
> and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of
> delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative
> response from neighbourhood residents and/or law
> enforcement agencies (Klein, 1971 p.13)."

As noted in several works, the youth gang phenomenon is concentrated in the lower-working class segment of the population. Historically, youth gangs comprised primarily

juvenile males, and today this claim still appears to be valid (Campbell, 1991). However, Spergel (1990) contends that the juvenile aspect of the gang has changed; gangs today also contain young adult males. These observations further imply: (i), that these segments of the population are most marginal to the dominant culture; and (ii), this marginalization is exacerbated when the population of these environments experiences the inward migration of new cultures (see: Cohen, 1955; Miller, 1958; Campbell, 1991; and Spergel, 1990).

The definition of a youth gang provided above should not be confused with delinquent youth group behaviour. Youth group behaviour is defined by Spergel as,

> "...law violating behaviour committed by juveniles in relatively small groups that tend to be ephemeral, i.e., loosely organized with shifting leadership. The delinquent group is engaged in various forms of minor or serious crime (1990 p.181)."

The present study focuses on the explanations offered to account for the emergence of "youth gangs", and not "youth groups". The following discussion identifies each of the major contributors to youth gang research and outlines their perspectives as these have evolved historically. A chronological summary of these explanations and the names of the contributors is set out in Appendix A of this thesis.

Although slight deviations from this format may occur for

reasons of clarity, the theoretical contributions are presented here in chronological order for two reasons. First, this approach avoids confusion in the presentation. Second, a chronological presentation more clearly illustrates the growth of the various theories and how they have changed, or in some cases remained the same, over time and have contributed to later formulations.

Explanations for Youth Gangs

The first major contributor who attempted to explain why youth gangs appear and disappear was Frederick Thrasher. In his study of "Gangland" (Chicago) during the 1920s, Thrasher (1936) identified 1,313 gangs. Thrasher noted that there were several types and age groups of youth gangs but that no two were alike. According to his analysis, the existence of "unsupervised groups" of youngsters often led to an irregular lifestyle which frequently resulted in criminal activities. Central to Thrasher's thesis is the notion that youth gangs form and thrive in the interstitial zones of an urban environment, which include the residential districts of the city that recede as business and industry encroaches.

Thrasher uses the term "tripartite empire" to explain gang activity in terms of an interstitial phenomenon. The central tripartite empire of the gang occupied an area that was characterized by deteriorating neighbourhoods, shifting

populations, and the concomitant mobility and disorganization associated with these phenomena: in other words, the poverty belt or slum which is subject to rapid population mobility and social disorganization due to the inward migration of newcomer populations (Thrasher, 1936). Consequently, the characteristics of these gangs were considered to be in a constant state of flux due to the changing population of the community which supplied members for the gangs.

Although Thrasher (1936) claimed that major gang activity occurs in the interstitial zones of an urban environment, he also indicated that gangs themselves were an interstitial element of an urban environment caught between their own culture and the encroaching dominant culture of the larger society. Gangs resulted from the boys' attempts to create a society for themselves which was not supplied within the community itself. The monotony and boredom experienced by young people in the zone of transition engendered the need for new experiences. In addition, many young people had difficulty making the transition to the status quo. The gang offered a substitute for what society failed to provide (excitement) and also offered support and acceptance (achievable status) which was often lacking within the community.

Shaw, et al (1929) expanded on Thrasher's notion of

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social disorganization as an explanation for why gangs emerged. They argued that social disorganization at the community level promoted the development of youth gangs. Social disorganization was defined as rapid social change that resulted in a breakdown in normative control. This phenomenon was a result of the inward migration of newcomer populations to an urban environment.

In their studies of Chicago during the 1930s, Shaw and McKay (1941) noted that high rates of gang activity and juvenile delinquency could be located in communities that contained the latest immigrant or migrant group. More often than not, these communities were located in the zone of transition, areas that were close to the inner city similar to what Thrasher (1936) identified as the interstitial region. Further analysis by Shaw and McKay (1941) revealed that as the immigrant or migrant population moved away from the inner city and assimilated into the broader society, involvement in youth gang activity, and juvenile delinquency in general, decreased substantially.

With the exception of research on juvenile delinquency, little in the way of concrete research or theory was offered on the phenomenon of youth gangs in North America until the 1940s when Whyte (1943) challenged Thrasher's and Shaw and McKay's notions of social disorganization.

Although Whyte (1943) agreed that ethnic violence could result from the rapid migration of one culture into an area of the city occupied by another, he argued that the social disorganization thesis was problematic due to the potential for bias on the part of the investigator. A slum area may have looked disorganized to a middle-class person, but to a resident there was a high degree of organization. In his study of "Cornerville", he suggested that gang formation could be traced to the habitual association of an individual with other gang members. In "Cornerville", the gang was an acceptable, and fundamental, institution of the community. As with other institutions, it served to stabilize the community by adding a sense of cohesion to gang members through a system of reciprocal relations and obligations. This phenomenon was facilitated somewhat by the inability of the community to assimilate into the broader fabric of the society that surrounded it. In order to succeed, members of the community had to be innovative through such activities as the "rackets" in order to experience a better lifestyle.

At approximately the same time as Whyte's research in the United States, Rogers (1945) conducted exploratory research on youth gang formation in Toronto. His research focused on both the role of the community and the characteristics of the individual gang members themselves. Rogers concluded that gangs formed for a variety of reasons. This conclusion led

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him to propose a multiple factor causal model. Accordingly,
he argued that boys formed and joined gangs because of; (i)
family discord; (ii) the lack of adequate parenting; (iii)
poverty; (iv) abnormal personalities; (v) the existence of a
gang neighbourhood tradition; (vi) a lack of interests and
hobbies; (vii) the insignificant role played by the church and
the school as socializers; (viii) poor housing conditions; and
(ix) the role of western culture in the generation of deviance
through competition.

In addition to factors identified in his multiple causal
model, Rogers (1945) argued that all of the gang members
identified in his study lacked a sense of attachment and
experienced feelings of rejection and inferiority. He
concluded that these feelings promoted the participation in,
and formation of, youth gangs and were exacerbated by the
distinct lack of adequate recreation facilities in the
community. The phenomenon of youth gangs could be
substantially reduced if recreation facilities were supplied
along with adequate role models to aid in the "proper"
socialization of adolescents.

The next major theoretical contribution with respect to
the emergence and persistence of youth gangs was provided by
Albert Cohen (1955). Cohen argued that youth gangs provided a
solution to certain problems of adjustment shared among a

group of individuals, in this case working-class children. His thesis centred around the notion that working class children were less likely to identify with middle-class aspirations, thus they were also less likely to conform to middle-class norms. Working class children were also faced with a status problem in that they were accorded the same low social status as their parents. Working class parents were often not able to provide material symbols of success such as money and cars, or send their children to college. As a result, middle-class children may have looked down on working-class children as inferior. Problems of conformity and status for working-class children were exacerbated in the educational system because educators applied middle-class values and performance expectations evenly across the student body. As a consequence, Cohen (1955) suggested that the delinquent subculture was often the solution for children who were denied status. The subculture provided status and conformity goals which were attainable by these groups of young people.

A response to Cohen's (1955) work came from Miller (1958). Miller argued that the standards of the lower-class were not opposite or different to those of the middle-class but, instead, were based on a distinctive tradition. Miller suggested that the cultural milieu of the lower-class engendered delinquent behaviour amongst "corner groups" (youth gangs) and that this activity represented accepted norms which

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automatically violated the norms of the larger society. The
norms associated with these groups were centred around efforts
to achieve status, conditions, or qualities which were valued
within the individual's most significant cultural milieu.
Non-law abiding avenues frequently provided a more immediate
and often greater return for a similar or smaller investment
of time and energy. The reinforcement of these behaviours
within the lower-class milieu assured their continuation.

In addition, Miller (1958) argued that there was a strong
relationship between corner "group membership" and matrilocal
homes. Homes in which the mother was either a single parent
or the primary provider were the source of those young people
seeking to have their belonging and status needs fulfilled.
"Belonging needs" were achieved by an individual when he
demonstrated "...knowledge of and a determination to adhere to
the system of standards and valued qualities defined by the
group" (Miller, 1958 p.15). "Status needs" were achieved when
the individual "...maintained by demonstrated possession of
the valued qualities of lower-class culture toughness,
smartness, expressed resistance to authority, daring, etc."
(Miller, 1958 p.15).

In the wake of the work of Albert Cohen (1955) and Walter
Miller (1958), North America was the site of several divergent
theoretical developments in the area of youth gangs. Relying

on data obtained from a number of ethnographic accounts of primitive societies, Bloch and Niederhoffer (1958) hypothesized that adolescents shared similar problems and behaviour in different cultural settings. They argued that North American culture did not adequately prepare adolescents, formally or otherwise, for their induction into the status of adults. In their terms, there were no "Rites de Passage".

The problem of inadequate social rituals was exacerbated in North American culture when a young person reached the age of majority but was still denied adult status, and the privileges that it provided, for reasons such as unemployment. Bloch and Niederhoffer (1958) further contended that "...equivalent forms of behaviour arise spontaneously among adolescents themselves, reinforced by their group structure which appears to provide the same psychological content and function as the more formalized rituals found in other societies" (1958 p.17). In North America, the gang appeared to fill the deep-seated needs of self identification experienced by all adolescents in all cultures, as well as providing each gang member with ego support and courage and a psychological sense of power and manhood.

Shortly after the publication of Bloch and Niederhoffer's work, Cloward and Ohlin (1960) proposed their theory of differential opportunity structure within the lower-class.

Building on the work of Durkheim, Merton, Shaw and McKay and Sutherland, the authors argued that not only were the means of attaining culturally prescribed goals limited but so too was the availability of those goals. Cloward and Ohlin suggested that lower-class adolescents who form and participate in delinquent subcultures have experienced strain. What they,

> "...are led to want and what is actually available to them is the source of a major problem of adjustment. Adolescents who form delinquent subcultures...have internalized an emphasis upon conventional goals. Faced with limitations on legitimate avenues of access to these goals, and unable to revise their aspirations downward, they experience intense frustrations; the exploration of nonconformist alternatives may be the result" (1960 p.86).

According to Cloward and Ohlin (1960), barriers to legitimate opportunities emanate from one primary source, education. First, lower-class adolescents usually experienced conflict with educators in school regarding appropriate success goals. Consequently, they experienced lower education levels than other groups. Second, where one culture would emphasize education as a means to success goals (e.g. Jewish) other cultures would not (e.g. Italian). Finally, structural barriers often precluded a post secondary education for lower-class adolescents; many families depended on the income of their children for subsistence which led to a never ending circle of poverty.

The authors went on to note that there were socially

structured variations in the availability of illegitimate

means as well as legitimate ones. Each individual within the

community occupied a position within both legitimate and

illegitimate opportunity structures. It was the community

which provided the individual with "...the attitudes, point of

view, the philosophy of life, the example, the motive, the

contacts, the friendships, the incentive" (Cloward and Ohlin,

1960 p.149).

The issue of the role of the community with respect to

delinquent subcultures was of importance in relation to

illegitimate opportunities and the social structure of the

slum. According to Cloward and Ohlin "...illegal opportunity

structures tend to emerge only when there are stable patterns

of accommodation between the adult carriers of conventional

and deviant values" (1960 p.158). This was true regardless of

whether the subculture was a "criminal" gang involved in

activities such as theft; a "conflict" gang involved in

warfare with other gangs; or a " retreatist" gang involved in

drug use (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960).

Following the work of Cloward and Ohlin (1960) the

influence of labelling theory and the role of the mass media

during the 1960s and 1970s drastically affected youth gang

research. Most research in this vein appears to suggest that

the mass media serve to facilitate the labelling process. One

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of the first authors to identify the role of the media in exaggerating the activities of youth gangs was Klein (1967). He argued that media reporting methods tended to create moral panics around the issue of gangs which were unjustified in relation to the amount of actual delinquent activity gangs participated in. The public's perception was distorted due to these reporting methods. Klein suggested that, in reality, most gang activity was confined to confrontations with other gangs and not the broader society.

The influence of labelling theory on youth gang research is most visible in the work of Stanley Cohen (1972). Using a model derived from disaster research, Cohen analyzed the role of the media in creating the 'Mods' and the 'Rockers', two rival British youth "gangs" of the 1960s. Cohen (1972) identified two factors underpinning the creation of the Mods and the Rockers; one structural and the other an aspect of human agency. First, he suggested that the increased affluence of the British working class in the 1960s threatened the hegemony of the ruling elite class. The media were used as an instrument by this class to create a moral panic around working-class youth with a view to revealing the dangers associated with middle-class affluence, especially when adolescents take on a consumptive role in society. Cohen (1972) argued that these two groups of working-class youths came to be identified as troublesome through amplified mass

media reports of their delinquent behaviour. Second, the youths formed together as groups due to boredom and the lack of "exciting" alternatives.

According to Cohen (1972) after the identification of the Mods and the Rockers, the media did its utmost to ensure that these two groups maintained their status as a threat to the moral fabric of society. Members of the public and various agencies within the criminal justice system were also influenced by the mass media's ability to amplify the deviant actions of the groups. This resulted in an inordinate amount of attention being paid to the "problem" and the creation of stereotypes.

Ironically, the corollary of this attention was twofold. First, the increased polarization between the two groups and between both of the groups and the public at large, led to an increase in deviance. Second, the creation of stereotypes led to the exploitation of the subculture of the "Mods" and the "Rockers". This involved exploiting their mode of dress for profit on the open market. The increase in deviant episodes led to the confirmation of the stereotypes, at least on behalf of the public, which in turn appeared to support the reports presented in the mass media. However, the cooptation of the styles presented by the "Mods" and the "Rockers" by adolescents in the broader society lessened the impact of the

presence of the two groups. The "Mods" and the "Rockers" faded away to become "folk devils" of the 1960s[1] and the perceived threat posed by them eventually gave way to other news-worthy items (Cohen, 1972).

Parallels to the creation of the "Mods" and the "Rockers" as "folk devils" in Great Britain have been identified in other countries also. In Australia, for example, Braithwaite and Barker (1978) noted the creation of the "Bodgies" and the "Widgies" as the "folk devils" of the 1950s. The authors concluded that the increased affluence enjoyed by the groups coupled with boredom resulted in undesirable and deviant behaviour which threatened the hegemony of the ruling elite class. In response, the ruling elite class used the mass media as an instrument to create a moral panic around the actions of working class youth with the intent to demonstrate the dangers associated with middle-class affluence.

In a similar vein, Miller (1976) noted that during the era of the urban crisis of the 1960s in New York City, the reporting of youth gangs in the media virtually disappeared. The media declared a moratorium on the term "gang" from 1966-1972 following which the term reappeared. He suggested that this occurred due to changes in gang structure and the media. The media chose to define gangs according to an outmoded definition used to identify only those groups which exhibited

the characteristics and behaviour of gangs which dominated the news headlines during the 1950s.

Although Miller (1976) does not identify how the media was used by law enforcement officials of New York to further social control ends, he does claim that youth gangs took a back seat to the events of the urban crisis. Officials with an interest in controlling gangs were able to claim effectiveness as a result of the media's inattention to gangs.

Miller (1976) also identified and attempted to answer two key questions: (i) why youth gangs persisted in the face of a changing environment; and, (ii) why there were recurring depictions that gangs had been extinguished, drastically changed, or radically transformed? In response to these questions, Miller argued that: (i) the youth gang was a permanent feature of the American social order which accounts for their persistence during times of environmental change; and, (ii) that although the average youth gang participated in generalized forms of deviance, specialization occurred in the face of a changing environment. Thus, definitions of youth gangs became outdated due to changes in gang behaviours. It was not until the new form of behaviour was identified as gang behaviour that gangs resurfaced as a social phenomenon.

A final example of the labelling approach is noted in

Muehlbaur's (1983) research on a gang called "The Losers", a gang that existed from 1970 - 1976 in the United States. Her research illustrated how the labelling process could produce a self fulfilling prophecy if the labelled individuals adopted the label. "The Losers" formed as a result of the cultural alienation they experienced in their community. Members of the group could not measure up to the middle and upper-class standards established within the education system and the community in general. There had been a long standing practice of selective economic and social exclusion executed in a negative manner towards members of the lower-class. Both individuals and groups that did not meet the standards established by the dominant culture were negatively labelled.

Muehlbaur (1983) noted that the high unemployment rate of the 1970s led to a surplus population of unemployed youth. Members of "The Losers" recognized that the establishment of a subculture was one way of dealing with this circumstance. This in turn called forth a negative response on the part of agencies within the criminal justice system, educators, business persons and the community at large. However, the community's response to "The Losers" increased the polarization between the gang and the broader society which served to escalate violent behaviour.

Although it could partially account for the appearance

and disappearance of particular youth gangs or specific periods of youth gang activity, labelling theory, and much of the theory and research that preceded it, could not accurately establish why youth gangs waxed and waned over time. This situation appeared to lead to a crossroads in theorizing and research; new theories to explain the phenomenon were necessary, or reformulations of existing theories were to be reapplied in such a manner that better explained the appearance and disappearance of youth gangs. In the main, it appeared that the latter choice prevailed. Reformulations of several of the contributions previously discussed began to emerge in the literature.

Several explanations have been combined to account for Mexican-American (Chicano) youth gangs in the U.S. For example, Moore (1978) utilized an approach that blended the work of Merton and of Cloward and Ohlin. She argued that the emergence of Chicano gangs in Southern California can be traced to racial discrimination. Moreover, her analysis of Chicano gang formation in Los Angeles during World War II indicates that surges in racist attitudes in the broader society are associated with increased gang formation and activities.

Although she does not address the issue of youth gang appearance and disappearance directly, Moore (1978) suggests

that three factors made illegitimate opportunities attractive to the Chicano gang which make youth gangs a permanent feature of the barrio. First, the ethnic distinctiveness of the Mexican-American (barrio) community tends to ensure its isolation from the broader society. Second, the nature of the barrio community, which usually involved some illegal activity, offered opportunity for deviant activity; this activity often occurred within the group context. Finally, the structure of the social welfare system in the United States has entrenched the low socio-economic status occupied by the Mexican-American community. Historically, Chicanos have experienced limited access to adequately paying and legitimate employment.

Moore (1978) suggested that the institutional system in the United States was guilty of "programming for failure". Health, welfare, education and criminal justice agencies all failed their Chicano clients by keeping them in a never ending cycle of dependence and poverty. She went on to claim,

> "...the present oppression of Chicanos is a direct continuation of institutional means of suppression that were developed immediately after the conquest of the Southwest by the United States" (1978 p.23).

Chicanos were the original settlers in the Southwest U.S. but were poorly represented in government and are still at the bottom of the social ladder.

At approximately the same time as Moore's analysis of

Chicano gangs in the United States, Joe and Robinson (1980) conducted research on four Asian youth gangs in Vancouver. Similar to Moore, Joe and Robinson's research, which spanned the period of 1975 to 1979, incorporated several aspects of the work of other previous scholars. Thrasher's (1936) inward migration thesis, Whyte's (1943) peer association thesis, Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) differential opportunity structure, and Moore's (1978) observation of ethnic distinctiveness all figured prominently in their research.

According to Joe and Robinson, immigrant Asian youths were prime youth gang candidates for four main reasons. First, the immigrant family did not meet the needs of the youth; he was often left on his own while both parents worked long hours. Second, after emigrating the family lost its ties to its traditional extended family and the support it provided. Third, immigrant youths often suffered from cultural alienation due to the problems they encountered learning English. Moreover, the alienation experienced by these youths was exacerbated due to their ethnic distinctiveness. Finally, the first three problems made material success unlikely. Thus, Asian immigrants were more likely to seek alternative means to acquire money and status amongst their peers. More often than not, these goals were achieved through participation in a gang.

Joe and Robinson's (1980) research highlighted the need for a more rigorous theoretical approach to research on gangs, an approach that appeared to be gaining momentum in other Western societies as well. The apparent need was satisfied with the return of labelling theory. Although labelling theory was most popular during the 1960s and the early 1970s, it returned in the 1980s, in part because it helped to explain the creation of deviant groups, but more importantly in response to the apparent call for "law and order" in Western societies.

In Great Britain, Pearson (1983) argued that the call for "law and order" by anti permissiveness moralists was actually a call for action to deflect a vast historical degeneration among the bloc of British people who constituted the "underclass". In an unprecedented move, the Conservative Government headed by Margaret Thatcher changed its established policies on crime causation. The notion that crime resulted from variables within the individual's environment, for which he/she could not be blamed, was changed so that the individual was ultimately held responsible for his/her actions. These policies were introduced so that the traditional British way of life could be preserved from the threat posed by gangs of young hooligans.

Pearson (1983) traced the concept of the "Hooligan" to

approximately 1890. He then traced the presence of youth gangs in British culture to the early 1600s. Through a review of historical documents, Pearson was able to establish what can be identified as a 20 year cycle of "respectable fears"; each successive generation is viewed by the previous one as being out of control and pulling away from the traditions and morality of the past.

Pearson argued that Britain of the 1980s was similar to other time periods; it was plagued by the same problems and there was no threat to the traditional British way of life. The problem was, and still remains, the social reproduction of the disadvantaged underclass "...those crimes associated with the materially disadvantaged underclass which have provided the continuing thread within this history of respectable fears" (Pearson, 1983 p.236).

The continuation of research on ethnic and class distinctiveness and the phenomenon of youth gangs was carried out by Vigil (1988). Vigil elaborated on Moore's (1978) analysis of the role of poverty and social status by taking an historical development perspective to the study of Chicano gang formation. He argued that: (i), the settlement patterns of Mexicans in the United States into visibly and physically inferior locations made adaptation difficult; (ii), the life of poverty led by most Mexican-Americans did not facilitate

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accommodation or assimilation; and (iii), racial discrimination from the past "...made early arrivals feel unwanted, and the years of large scale immigration to large populated areas undergoing rapid social change in this century created the conditions for social problems" (1988 p.24).

Vigil concluded his analysis by stating that high rates of poverty and low social status forced young people into gang life. He identified the core members of a Chicano gang as "Cholos", street youth who are marginal to both Mexican and Anglo culture and their families. The other Chicano gang members usually came from crowded households, were subjected to racial discrimination, did poorly at school as a result of cultural and language barriers and lacked a sense of belonging.

> "As long as certain environmental and economic patterns persist, the gang subculture will continue to recruit new members, especially given the reinforcement the subculture receives from those who return from prison life. There will always be Cholos and among them individuals who are at risk of becoming gang members" (Vigil, 1988 p.175).

To explain the Chicanos' youth gang experience, Horowitz (1990) proposed a "rational choice" model. She accepted a materialist position; immediate material self interest provides the motivation to join a gang, rather than the status associated with the expressive and symbolic aspects of initiation. Her analysis lends support to that of Vigil

(1988) in that it underscores the notion of barrio isolation and the role of poverty and racial discrimination in the lives of Chicano gang members.

In the wake of research on ethnic and class distinctiveness and the return of labelling theory and its impact on gang research, the 1980s also witnessed the influence of policies with respect to the phenomenon of youth gangs. Klein and Maxson (1989) have argued that there has been a decline of scholarly interest in gangs in the United States at a time when significant changes occurred. They have identified three conceptual changes in the area of gangs: (i), the escalating use of violence by gangs; (ii), group behaviour versus gang behaviour; and (iii), the identification, or misidentification, of gang related activity.

Klein and Maxson (1989) have noted that the etiological writings of the 1960s such as labelling theory and the behavioral approach, which focus on gang behaviour as self reinforcing, have been abandoned in favour of a deterrence approach which was focused on control. The authors viewed this development as unwarranted because the previous etiological theories had not been invalidated.

Klein and Maxson (1989) are critical of the conservative trend that engendered the development of gang control policies

and "neo-positivist" control programmes through surveillance, incapacitation and retribution. They maintain that the deterrence approach taken in the United States does not address the real problems in urban society; rather, they argue that structured inequality leads to the development and continuation of gangs. Moreover, they note that American society can expect to see more, rather than less, gang activity as a result of policies based on a deterrence model.

As indicated elsewhere in this thesis, the phenomenon of the gang is primarily a male juvenile one. However, the involvement of females in gangs has been well documented by Campbell (1991). Her analysis of the role of females in gangs has led her to conclude that, historically, females had one or more of four possible roles: (1), the sex object where she was viewed as cheap and rejected by significant others; (2), the tomboy, where she was resented by boys and ridiculed by her family and friends who waited for her to grow up; (3), the independent woman who raised her children in an all female household; and (4), the good wife who waited for the male to take her away to the "good life".

Campbell (1991) synthesized the available data on females in gangs and concluded that gangs are still a predominantly male phenomenon. Females who join find themselves serving in an auxiliary position. Second, the predominant role has

shifted to that of the tomboy. Third, females are still subjected to sexual objectification in both gangs and in the literature where they are often portrayed as property. Finally, females appear as both the cause and the cure of male gang delinquency. On the one hand, "good girls" get the male out of the gang while "bad girls" get the male more involved in gang activity.

To address the question of why gangs formed, Campbell (1991) suggested that in the United States the merging of cultures has led to problems. Each culture has held fast to its own sense of cultural identity while at the same time accepting the philosophy of the "American dream" which did not recognize social class and thus placed the responsibility for failure on the individual. Those individuals who joined gangs were often from backgrounds characterized by under-education, unemployment, minority status, criminal activity and little to look forward to in terms of economic success. In short, these individuals had the least to gain from the status quo which often led to the formation of a counter-culture that rejected dominant social institutions, roles and values in the broader society. In this context, the participation in criminal activity by gang members represented a lifestyle within the community. Campbell then concluded,

> "Gangs as a part of the local social matrix wax and wane, changing in the nature of their criminal involvement and their geographical and ethnic location. Clampdowns by police or politicians, surges of community programs may

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suppress them temporarily. Media attention, economic slumps may revitalize them" (1991 p.233).

However, Campbell noted that her research results and conclusions could not be generalized beyond the context of her study in New York City.

Summary

Although research on gangs in Canada is limited, in the United States and, to a lesser extent Great Britain, research has been conducted which describes the emergence of youth gangs in particular places at specific times. However, very little research on youth gangs addresses the question of why they appear to wax and wane over time. The two exceptions to this observation are research projects that were carried out in the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

First, Campbell (1978) concluded that youth gangs were not a social anomaly but a permanent feature of American society. Therefore, youth gangs and youth gang activity have been and will continue to be a social reality in that country. The public's perception of the problem is the only identifiable changing variable which may be manipulated by members of the mass media. Second, Stanley Cohen (1972) in Great Britain and Braithwaite and Barker (1978) in Australia identified the role of the media in the creation of youth "gangs" through the identification and amplification of

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youthful deviance, which quickly result in moral panics.

In sum, the theory and research addressing the youth gang phenomenon in North America has tended to take a somewhat eclectic approach. As Spergel's (1990) recent comprehensive review indicates, key factors such as race, ethnicity, social isolation, poverty, community disorganization and individual pathology account for much of the youth gang phenomenon. He argues that contemporary gangs are primarily located in lower-class, slum, ghetto and barrio communities. However, he notes that it is unclear as to wether or not culture, race, or ethnicity per se account for youth gang activity. Instead, as argued by Rogers (1945), Spergel contends that it is likely that these factors interact with community characteristics such as poverty, social instability, failures of inter-agency organization, and social isolation to engender youth gang formation and activity. Consequently, most youth gang activity is concentrated in neighbourhoods occupied by ethnic minorities. As with much of the previous research, Spergel (1990) does not address the issue of why youth gangs wax and wane over time.

NOTES

1. Cohen (1972) defines folk devils as historical figures
    that appear in the present day context as romantic heroes
    of the past. He refers to the "Teddy Boys" as folk devils
    of the 1950s; their intolerable behaviour of the past is
    now interpreted as acceptable and often desirable.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF YOUTH GANGS IN VANCOUVER:

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The following is an analysis of youth gang activity in
Vancouver from 1900 to 1985.[1] Three waves of gang activity,
and the most recent surge of activity that began in 1973, are
noted and discussed with respect to the specific activities of
the gangs, their characteristics, and the community responses
to them. However, the boundaries around the identified waves
of gang activity are not always clear. Indeed, there is one
instance where overlap between the waves occurs making it (at
times) difficult to determine which type of gang belongs to
which particular wave. The time line in Figure 3-1 below
illustrates the major waves of gang activity in Vancouver
including the instance where overlap occurs. A list of the
articles used to identify the waves of gang activity is set
out in Appendix C.

Reports of youth gangs first appeared in Vancouver in
1909 when two incidents involving groups of youths identified
as gangs attracted both media and public attention. A gang of
young boys, the oldest of which was 14 years of age, was
apprehended by the police following a series of house
burglaries in the Mount Pleasant area. Around the same time,
another gang of boys was arrested for the theft of six

FIGURE 3-1

Waves of Youth Gang Activity
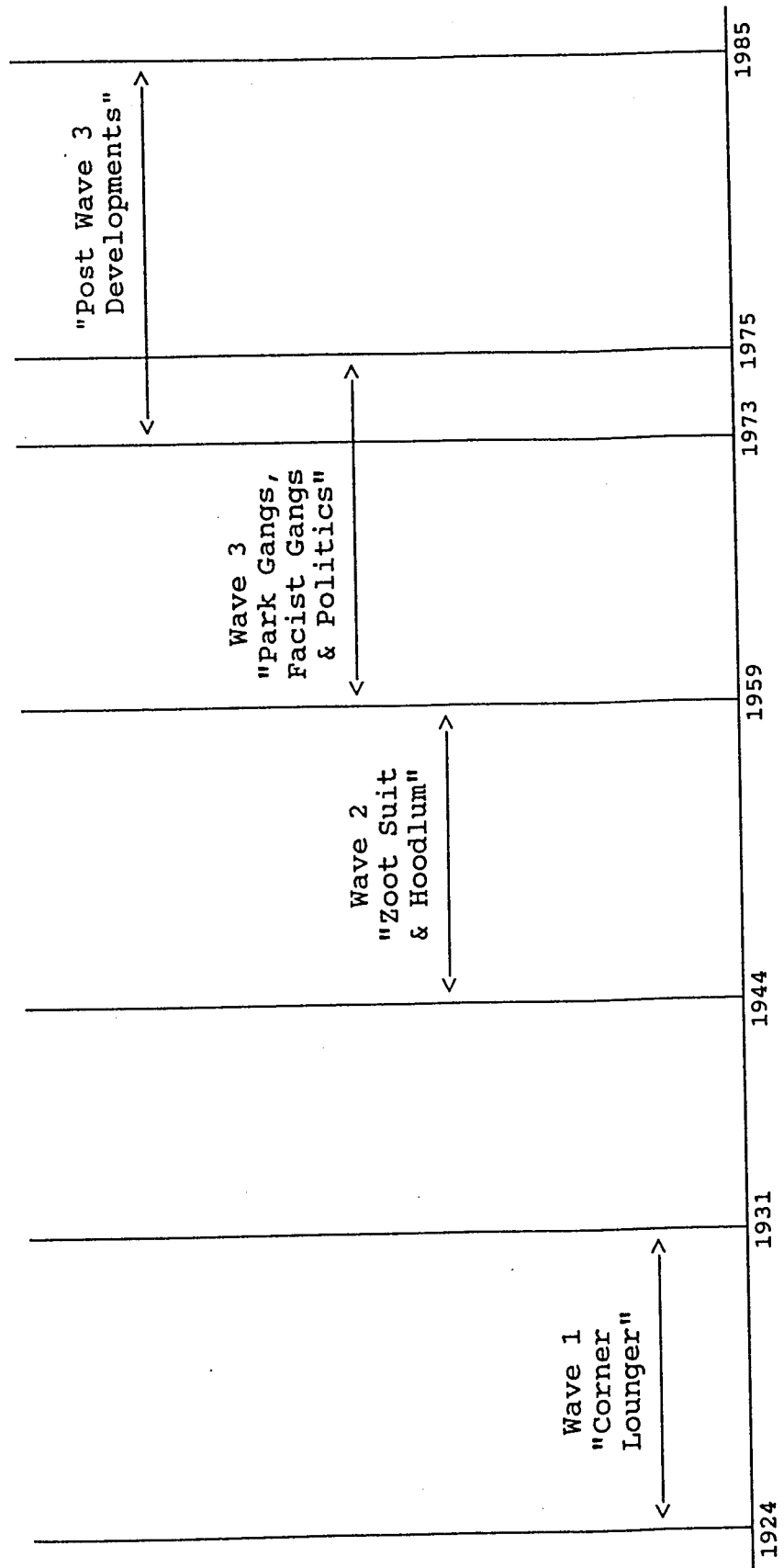
bicycles. Neither of these incidents were considered a serious problem in reports appearing in "The Province", although public reaction to these events involved calls for increased levels of incarceration and punishment for these youthful deviants.[2]

Although the gang related events of 1909 had created a minor furore amongst both citizens and criminal justice system officials alike, an interest in gangs disappeared. Other reports of gang activities did not appear until 1912. At that time, a small war between Caucasian and Chinese gangs occurred near Chinatown. The cause of the event appeared to be related to racial tensions and was initiated by the Caucasian gang.[3]

WAVE I, "CORNER LOUNGER GANGS": 1924-1931

Notwithstanding the events of 1909 and 1912, the first significant wave of gang activity in Vancouver emerged in the 1920s. This period marked the beginning of the era of what were represented at the time as "corner lounger" gangs. These gangs were involved in several types of activitiess which could be considered delinquent including vandalism and housebreaking.[4] Although there was some violence, mainly involving the use of firearms during robberies, the hallmark of corner lounger gangs appeared to be criminal activities which would provide a profit for their efforts such as

burglary and theft.[5]

While there were exceptions, the most notable feature of
these gangs was the geographical areas they occupied and the
distinctive names adopted by the gangs which reflected those
areas. Three gangs were identified; the first two were
considered to constitute a serious social problem, while the
third was not. First, the "Collingwood Street gang" comprised
boys aged 16-20. The gang had the reputation for being
involved in criminal activities with an emphasis on violent
street robberies. Their activities instilled a sense of fear
into the more senior members of the Collingwood area
community, who were often victimized by the gang, and this
resulted in several community meetings and a call for an
increase in criminal prosecution.[6] The other gang which
caused a great deal of concern at the time was known as the
"Cordova Street gang". Four of the youths were found sleeping
in a downtown east-side parking lot along with stolen goods
the gang had acquired. It appeared that members of the gang
were little more than street urchins. The arrested youths
implicated five other members of the gang in a series of
robberies. Nine members of the gang were arrested following
an investigation by police which connected the gang to several
house thefts and the armed robbery of a shoe store.[7] Finally,
five members of the "Homer Street gang" were arrested
following the theft of an automobile. The two oldest members

of the gang were only 11 years old so the seriousness of the event was minimized. The gang was more than likely attempting to copy the activities of some other gang rather than acting in an organized fashion. These members were subsequently released into the custody of their parents for discipline.[8]

In addition to reports of corner lounger gangs, unidentified gangs or groups also had an impact in the first wave of gang activity in Vancouver. Little information is available on these gangs, but several events illustrate the diversity of their activities. One youth gang was accused of committing a series of drug store robberies using firearms[9] while another was seen setting fire to a store in south Vancouver.[10] A third gang consisting of seven youths was arrested following what police identified as an "orgy of crime" in the city.[11] Yet another gang of boys was arrested following a series of "safe cracking" episodes[12] and a gang of 14 juvenile "gunmen" and burglars were arrested and charged for a series of six robberies with violence in which pistols and automatic weapons were used.[13]

Despite the apparent dangerousness of corner lounger gangs, there is no evidence to suggest that these gangs, or any of the other groups, actually caused physical harm to anyone even though the potential was high. The exception was one case where a member of the so-called "Silk Stocking gang"

shot and wounded a store proprietor during the robbery of his store. Elmer Almquist, the member of the gang who was responsible for the shooting, was of adult age and, on conviction, was sentenced to seven years in the federal penitentiary.[14]

Although later reports of youth gangs suggested a higher degree of violence, more often than not they appeared to be considered a nuisance to the police and court system due to a lack of facilities available to handle juvenile offenders, including gang members.[15] The juvenile detention facility was extremely overburdened, thus parents and families were delegated the responsibility of disciplining these wayward youths. This was especially true for cases in which females were involved in gang activity even though this was extremely rare. There were only two occasions where females reportedly participated in gang activity and in both cases they acted as confederates for the males in the gang during thefts. In one case, a juvenile female was charged with possession of stolen property[16] and in another a female was arrested and later released after the gang of four males she was with was caught attempting to steal gasoline.[17]

Following the wave of gang activity in the 1920s and early 1930s youth gang activity waned in Vancouver. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a smattering of gang or group

activity occurred, but these gangs appeared to be ephemeral and poorly organized. Ironically, this era of activity engendered the terms "hoodlum gangs"[18] and "young hooligans[19]", terms that would reappear at a later date in Vancouver gang history. Little is known about these gangs other than that they were comprised of young males with an average age of 18. They were quite adroit at evading the police and the members of the gangs were never clearly identified. The gangs were primarily involved in property crimes including vandalism and arson. Some of these gangs were considered responsible for broken windows, smashed furniture and a series of fires that occurred at several schools including Kitsilano Secondary and Point Grey Junior Secondary School.[20]

Although few in numbers, other gangs were considered more violent. One neighbourhood gang was accused of bludgeoning a night watchman to death while robbing him. The event was witnessed by an 11 year old male who was given police protection prior to the inquest after receiving public death threats by the gang.[21]

WAVE II, ZOOT SUITS AND HOODLUM GANGS: 1944-1959

Gang activity returned to Vancouver in 1944 in the form of riots. By that time, Vancouver had undergone drastic changes. The demographic character of the city had changed due to population increases and urban expansion.[22] As well,

Vancouver had become more metropolitan. The suburban areas of the Lower Mainland were increasing in size as were the cities. Urban change was partly a response to demographic changes in the British Columbia work force but also as a result of the influence of World War II on Canadian culture.[23] Arguably, these changes affected young people and may have influenced the emergence of a new type of youth gang, the "zoot suiters".

Unlike the gangs that preceded them, zoot suiters emerged with some distinctive qualities. In addition to their own specialized vocabulary, they wore large, waist length, square shouldered jackets, baggy trousers called "strides" that were tight at the ankle but measured as much as 60 centimetres across at the knee and a "dog-haired" style of hair which was longer than average in length. The average age of members ranged from 15-17 years[24] and zoot suit gangs were easily identified as different from other adolescents. The reason for their emergence remains unclear, but it appears that other cities in Canada also had zoot suit gangs which suggests a wide spread social movement.[25] As well, zoot suit gangs were evident during riots in Los Angeles in 1943 which implies that the zoot suit phenomenon was international in scope.[26]

Vancouver's "zoot suit riots" of 1944 were apparently the result of tension between merchant seamen involved in the war effort and youth, including zoot suiters, who were not able to

fight for King and country due to their young age or physical impediments.[27] This tension was fuelled by a false accusation made by a merchant seaman who claimed zoot suiters had beaten him unconscious.[28] Although this statement was later retracted, the first riot was reported to have led to escalating animosity between the two groups of adversaries.[29]

On July 31, 1944 another battle between zoot suit gangs and merchant seamen occurred. A mob of more than 200 civilians, presumably merchant seamen, were confronted and dispersed by military police as they wandered the streets of downtown Vancouver in the vicinity of Granville and Smythe Streets in search of zoot suiters.[30] In a similar incident in the West End, merchant seamen roamed the streets looking for zoot suiters to engage in battle. Fighting between the two factions lasted for over three days and there was discussion of implementing a curfew in the city. This measure proved to be unnecessary, however, as both civilian and military police forces, with the assistance of citizens, were able to control the situation.[31]

The end of World War II brought about the end of hostilities between merchant seamen and zoot suiters and zoot suit gangs disappeared. Small gangs or groups of youth "vandals" and "thieves" roamed the streets of Vancouver but they were not considered a serious threat to society.[32] By

1947, however, a small surge of gang activity forced a re-
evaluation of the gang situation.

Two factors appeared to influence this reassessment.
First, the seriousness of crimes engaged in by gangs had
increased substantially. Some gangs began to target
automobiles which were either stripped, and the parts sold
illegally, or exported to other provinces or the United
States.[33] After several months of police investigation, one
Vancouver gang was known to have travelled as far as
Abbotsford to steal cars.[34] More importantly, however, youth
gangs were now reportedly being trained and mobilized by a
"Fagin" gang leader. It was claimed that gangs of juvenile
and young adult males age 13 and older were trained in
criminal activity, including the use of firearms, and then set
in motion to rob banks and armouries in the Vancouver area.
The intended purpose of the armoury thefts was to obtain an
arsenal of weapons so that the "adult mastermind" could sell
them on the "underworld" market. After a series of such
robberies, a police investigation led to a surprise encounter
with one of the gangs. A gun battle ensued in which two
police officers and one gang member were killed and one police
officer and several other gang members were seriously
injured.[35] This encounter appeared to end the armoury
robberies and the influence of the "adult mastermind" on youth
but it did not affect the existence or intensity of youth

gangs.

In addition to the increased organization of gangs, rivalry between gangs attracted considerable attention in 1947. Following a small fracas near "Happyland"[36], a gang war, involving as many as 300 Kerrisdale and East End youths between the ages of 17-20 at the intersection of 41st Avenue and Granville Street signalled the beginning of several territorial battles between the rival gangs.[37] The ensuing battles would occur in one of the gangs' neighbourhood. The size of these gangs averaged between 20 and 30 but some gangs were apparently able to band together in larger groups in order to take on the "enemy". An east-west rivalry seemed to exist at the time as pick-up trucks loaded with youth would roam the city in search of a "beef". The visitors would arrive, usually crammed into the back of these pick-up trucks and ready for battle. When the police arrived on the scene, the explanation offered for the incident usually included the accusation that the other side was responsible for instigating the fight. However, the visitors could usually not account for their presence, either geographically or numerically, at the scene which was usually in their adversary's neighbourhood.[38]

The reason for the tension between the two rival factions of youth may be identified as a type of juvenile "class war".

The East End gang would blame the "college kids" for starting the fights while Kerrisdale youth would accuse the "East Ender" gang of taunting them to the point of battle.[39]

As the animosity between the rival gangs of Kerrisdale and East Vancouver ran its course, the West Side of Vancouver began to experience gang problems. The area around Broadway and Alma Streets (Point Grey) became attractive to "hoodlum youth gangs" at weekends. It was reported that the trouble stemmed from an earlier dispute at Happyland. Attention to this area peaked when a 17 year old male was stabbed by a 13 year old male following a dance.[40] This and other "rowdy" activities attracted a significant amount of public and police attention and the activities were quickly extinguished before they escalated into more serious problems. Along with the areas of Kerrisdale and East Vancouver, Point Grey had gained the reputation of being one of the three worst in Vancouver at the time. This area would continue to be the centre of considerable gang activity throughout the 1950s.

Following the small surge of activity in 1947, attention to gangs declined for a period of one year. By 1949, however, gangs, intertwined with reports on juvenile delinquency, reappeared as a social problem needing attention. A youth social worker identified by the pseudonym of "Kind Joe" argued that gangs in Vancouver were not as yet a "serious problem".

By his account, gangs were not well organized, had an ephemeral membership, and were engaged in "minor" criminal activity. This, however, would change if control over potential gang members and gang activities was not increased. "Kind Joe" was forecasting a problem with youth gangs in Vancouver which would follow the example set by gangs in other Canadian cities such as Toronto. He likened gangs in that city to juvenile mobsters that plagued the city and its people.[41]

It seems that "Kind Joe's" observations were indeed prescient. Control of gangs and gang activity did not increase substantially and, as a consequence, 1949 witnessed the beginning of the most intensive surge of gang activity up to this point in Vancouver's history. Gangs were rarely identified by a specific gang name; instead, the terms "hoodlum" and "hooligan" would reappear as generic labels used to identify the gangs.

The Vancouver police responded to this surge of gang activity with warnings of prosecution and threats of severe penalties. These threats were moderately effective in quelling public concern over the issue, but did little to reduce the intensity of gang activity. One special officer assigned to work with juveniles noted that a failure to implement the preventative projects suggested a year earlier

more than likely led to the surge in gang activity.[42]

Similar to the zoot suiters before them, the gangs of the late 1940s also distinguished themselves from their predecessors. These differences were manifested in three primary ways. First, participation in criminal activity had branched out to include more than 20 types of crimes ranging from automobile theft, through breaking and entering, vandalism, on the street purse snatching, robbery, and assault with a deadly weapon to attempted murder.[43] Second, gangs were also accused of engaging in a myriad of status offenses punishable under the Juvenile Delinquents Act such as sexual perversion, uncontrolled partying and drinking orgies.[44] Finally, this era of gang history is best remembered as the "spring blade knife" era.[45] Gangs of 18 year old knife wielding hoodlums, using "spring knives" with four inch stiletto blades, became the focus of public attention for much of this time period.[46]

The events which opened a floodgate of concern about gangs and criticism of police control activities can be traced to two major incidents involving gangs. First, Vancouver experienced a severe amount of vandalism and malicious damage on Halloween night in 1949. Gangs apparently played a significant role in these events prompting Police Chief Mulligan to unveil a new policy to "crackdown" on all forms of

juvenile delinquency (crime), especially gang activity. As he
stated at the time,

> "Vancouver police have ended their "kid glove" policy
> toward juvenile offenders in a effort to combat 'rampant
> vandalism, organized teen-aged gangs, uncontrolled
> partying and drinking orgies'".[47]

The second incident was an unprovoked attack of "knife-
wielding young hoodlums" led by a 16 year old juvenile on a
meeting of Junior Forest Wardens in McBride School annex.
This action resulted in increased support for city council's
drive against gangs. The unidentified gang threatened to cut
the throats of those at the meeting if they attempted to leave
or call the police. The intentions of the gang were not
noted, they appeared to be only interested in interfering in
the other group's activities. Following the incident, a
report claimed,

> "Mayor Thompson's drive against juvenile delinquency in
> Vancouver gained angry reinforcements today following an
> unprovoked attack Tuesday night on an organized teen-
> agers' meeting by knife wielding hoodlums".[48]

Other reports of knife carrying gangs resembling those in
the movie "West Side Story" served to undermine the public's
confidence that police policy at the time was effective in
dealing with the gang issue.[49] The Mayor's call for the
formation of a "hoodlumism committee" thus achieved
substantial community and police support.[50] Indeed, a
statement by Chief Mulligan underscored the Mayor's point when

he said,

> "We must tie it (law enforcement) in with a program
> that's going to appeal to the youngsters and keep them
> from roaming the streets in gangs".[51]

Despite the formation of the committee and the several other rallies which emphasized the need for a concerted community effort to deal with the problem, by 1950, gang activity had reached an all time high[52] and gangs had become front page news. Included in this surge of activity was the dramatic increase in vandalism and the return of the zoot suiters as an identifiable gang force.[53] Other gangs were also identified by the districts they occupied as various hoodlum gangs claimed certain areas as their own. The areas around the 3000 block of West Broadway Street, Broadway Street and Alma Street were home to the "Alma Dukes", and the area surrounding the Victoria Drive Community Centre, an area that would later be called "Little Chicago", was home to the "Vic Gang". These areas, along with East Vancouver, quickly became the battle grounds for inter-gang warfare.[54] "Friday night madness" was the term used to describe an evening of gang fights between the warring district gangs.[55]

Due to the generic labelling of youth gangs as gangs of young hoodlums, it is difficult to determine which district gang was responsible for the reported events at the time. For example, a failed robbery attempt of a small grocery store in

which firearms were discharged was committed by an unidentified gang.[56] As well, fights between rival gangs following teen dances at the Alma Academy at Alma and Broadway were not attributed to any particular gang(s).[57] However, it is possible that identification was impossible due to the large number of youths involved in the incidents. As many as 100, or more, youths were counted during one battle.[58] As well, fights occurring in the Mount Pleasant district between rival gangs were not associated with any particular gang[59] and an attempted arson in the same area was blamed on a nameless hoodlum gang.[60] The same problem of generic labelling also made it difficult to determine which gangs were involved in the disturbances that occurred during several high school dances.[61]

Although not mentioned specifically, the types of individuals involved in gang activity varied substantially. On the one hand, hoodlum gang members were portrayed as "depraved career criminals" who threatened not only public safety, but the moral fabric of society.[62] In one incident, a hoodlum gang of eight males aged 15-17 was accused of attempting to extort money from young children. When a father of a victim ventured to put an end to the extortion,

> "...he took his son to a rooming house in the west end...and in one room found seven or eight boys 15 to 17 years of age, nude, rolling around on beds and chesterfields, smoking cigarets".[63]

Alternatively, a gang of juveniles and youths from "responsible families" was arrested and charged with a myriad of offenses including assault with a dangerous weapon, a spring knife, and obstructing a police officer.[64]

During 1950 and 1951, the streets of Vancouver appeared to be frequently controlled by "lawless youths". Street brawls between gangs in the Point Grey area and random assaults of innocent victims or those caught in the cross-fire of gang warfare consumed much of police and media attention. During one weekend alone, eight individuals were hospitalized as a result of random gang violence.[65] The use of firearms and knives also increased.[66] Four bystanders were hospitalized following a gun battle between district and zoot suit gangs in the 1100 block of Granville street.[67]

Beginning in 1950, zoot suit gangs had reappeared on the Vancouver gang scene. It is not clear whether or not these gangs were organized and led by original members or if the gangs were completely replenished with new members and leaders. It appears that many of the members were juveniles from lower-class families who were also classified as hoodlums. It also appears that there were several different factions of zoot suit gangs, but they were usually identified by the generic term "zoot suit gang". The zoot suiters first reappeared as the cause of a disturbance at Twenty-fifth

Avenue and Main Street following a citizen's complaint of the "youthful occupation" of a street corner at night.[68]

Other more serious incidents involving zoot suiters were also identified. On one occasion they were accused of attempting to assault a man and a woman for no apparent reason.[69] They were also involved in the brutal assault of a pedestrian during a failed robbery attempt[70] and accused of committing a robbery with the use of firearms.[71] However, zoot suit gangs attracted the most attention following three notable incidents. The first event involved the theft of a large truck and the robbery of its driver. According to the driver, a trio of zoot suit hoodlums discussed his fate but decided not to kill him.[72] The second incident was just one of seven recorded by police during one day. A 71 year old mother of a man engaged in a battle with a gang of 15 zoot suiters was attacked when she tried to assist her unconscious son.[73] Finally, zoot suit gangs were widely condemned when they were accused of robbing a store minded by a woman confined to a wheelchair.[74]

Violent episodes involving zoot suit and neighbourhood gangs continued to occupy public attention during the early 1950s. Concern over zoot suiters, and youth gangs generally, reached a zenith in 1951 when B.C. Senator, Tom Reid, claimed that the police appeared to be ineffective in dealing with

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gangs; drastic measures needed to be taken. Organizations

such as the Youth Guidance Division (YGD) of the Vancouver

Police Department claimed that a 50 percent reduction in gang

activity had been achieved in April of 1950 since its

formation in March of 1950.[75] However, the short term

reduction of gang related events did not appear to have any

substantial effect on the nature of gang activity. Following

another shooting incident involving gangs, the Senator

suggested that gang members convicted of crimes should be

punished to the full extent of the law. The application of

these harsh penalties would thwart recruitment efforts by

communist elements in society. Reid believed that gang

members were the most susceptible to communist doctrine and

thus easy prey to communist party recruitment drives.[76]

Despite Reid's call for law and order, a stance which was

enthusiastically embraced by the Vancouver Police, the surge

of gang activity that began in 1949 continued well into 1952.

The activities that zoot suit and other youth gangs enjoyed

appeared to continue unabated. On the less violent side, a

gang of eight teenagers was arrested following a series of 18

house robberies.[77] This gang appeared to be one of several

that routinely engaged in house robberies and vandalism.[78]

More violent episodes included a gang war involving more

than 100 youths in the 2100 block of Adanac Street where

knives and "billy" clubs were used in the battle.[79]
Indiscriminate acts of assault and robbery of citizens
continued to occur[80]; both district and zoot suit gangs were
deemed responsible and there was a renewed call to establish
law and order in the community by both a religious leader and
a Provincial Magistrate.[81] There is evidence to suggest some
gang members were severely dealt with, such as the case where
a 17 year old youth was transferred to adult court and
sentenced to 20 months in prison for vandalism.[82] Whether or
not this sentence reflected standard practices at the time is
unclear, but intensive police control activity became routine.

By April of 1950, Vancouver police had identified 27 gang
meeting places, or "hangouts". Coffee bars, pool/billiard
halls, bowling alleys, and several street corners appeared to
be the preferred location for gangs. In addition, a police
investigation revealed that at least one unidentified gang was
making its own crude weapons including a gas pipe "black
jack", wooden clubs and chains used as "knuckle dusters".[83]

Police control activities, fuelled by public outcry,
intensified almost to the point of fanaticism. Following a
dance in the area of Tenth and Alma Street (Point Grey),
police arrested a gang of youths for hurling insults at what
was reported to be a rival gang.[84] While some problems were
experienced at school dances, concern over gang violence at

Carleton School and Cavell School prompted the discontinuation of all dances by Vancouver school trustees.[85] Combined with the various fights that had occurred earlier in this wave of activity, the problem of gangs at school dances sealed the fate of gangs in Vancouver. Gangs quickly became the scapegoats for unidentified and/or unsolved crimes. For instance, the drowning of a nine year old boy was attributed to hoodlum gangs without any evidence whatsoever to implicate their involvement.[86]

As well, in order to thwart any attempts by gangs to organize, gangs became the target of proactive police control activities. The three "trouble spots" - Happyland, Point Grey and Kerrisdale - were subject to extra police patrols in the event the gangs became active.[87]

Whether or not police activity engendered the decline of gang activities is moot. Arguably, the use of spring knives and knuckle dusters declined as retailers known to police responded to requests to limit sales of these items.[88] However, although gang activities appeared to have declined, they had not totally disappeared. Indeed, some gangs appeared to be experiencing a transformation.

Instead of confronting victims on the street and robbing them, some gangs had begun to use 1930s vintage automobiles

converted into what police identified as "Hot-Rods".[89] Other,
more established, gangs had started to identify themselves by
name. In particular, one gang by the name of the "Little
Capones", originating from the area of "Little Chicago"
(Victoria Drive and 43rd Avenue), were noted for their violent
tactics and history of armed robbery. The leader, Bobby
Wondward, and several members were returned to Oakalla Prison
and the Boys' Industrial School respectively, following their
escape and subsequent re-arrest from these institutions.[90]
Finally, in an unrelated incident, another unidentified gang
of juveniles escaped from the Boys Industrial School and was
subsequently arrested for shoplifting. This particular gang
was known for its fashionable dress which included "bomber"
style jackets and "strides", a zoot suit style of pants.[91]
Finally, some gangs were identified by their hair style.
Although not identified as zoot suit gang members, three
"long-haired hoodlums" displaying no respect for the
magistrate during sentencing were given jail terms for their
part in 17 burglaries and three armed robberies.[92]

By the end of 1952, reports of gang activity in Vancouver
had vanished but, by 1954, gangs and gang activities had
returned. Although less intensive, this next surge proved to
be far more consistent reaching a peak in 1956 and continuing
into the late 1950s. Gangs and gang activities during this
period appeared to reflect those of the late 1940s and early

1950s. The exception to this observation is the zoot suit gangs who were pronounced "dead" at a convention of school principals.[93]

The earlier practice of applying the generic term "hoodlum gangs" to youth gangs established in the 1940s continued until the early 1960s. Gang activity during the remainder of this period consisted of two principal aspects: crimes for profit; and inter-gang warfare. There was vandalism and some random assaults, but to a much lesser degree than the other two primary activities. The average age of gang members still appeared to range from 12 to the early 20s[94] and the gangs remained large, ranging from 30 to 40 in membership. Other visible aspects had changed however.

First, although specific details are not available, it was reported that females were involved in gang activity. This was the first time since the corner lounger period.[95] Presumably, the females acted as confederates to male gang members, but there is also evidence to suggest they may have been engaged in sexual activity with male gang members. Three male gang members were charged with engaging in sexual intercourse with a juvenile when authorities and the parents of a female gang member discovered she had been engaging in sexual activities with members of the gang.[96] Second, in addition to complaints about gangs creating havoc in "hot-

rods", concern over motorcycle gangs appeared. In one report, a motorcycle gang comprising 16-19 year old members was involved in a series of thefts.[97] Finally, the physical appearance of some gangs had included a hair style known as the "duck cut".[98]

The commission of crimes for profit reflected the patterns established in the late 1940s and early 1950s; residential break-ins and the robberies of individuals and businesses appeared to be the most common practices.[99] In the East End of the city, a gang of juveniles aged 13-16 was arrested and charged in connection with over 100 burglaries.[100] Inter-gang warfare also appeared to be a continuation of previous practices. The district/territorial gang trend established by the gangs of the late 1940s and early 1950s continued and the police argued that gang trouble had expanded to include just about all areas of the city.[101] However, reports of gang activities indicated concentrations in the areas around Robson and Seymour Streets, Granville Street, Mount Pleasant, Grandview Park, Fraserview, and the three previously noted "trouble spots": East Vancouver, Kerrisdale, and Point Grey. As well, several unnamed cafes on East Hastings Street featured as meeting places for gangs and centres for gang activities such as parties and rival gang fights.[102] By 1956, the police list of suspected gang "hangouts" had expanded to 83, with East End cafes figuring

prominently on the list.[103]

Concern over gang activities surged in November of 1955 following a weekend of violent episodes involving gangs. Robbery, including assault and the abduction of a 15 year old Vancouver girl, elicited both fear and criticism of gangs.[104] The police responded by attempting to minimize the problem, and a police report on the subject indicated that juvenile violence was under control. In the event that gang activity did occur, the police threatened to severely punish any gang members and hoodlums who were arrested.[105] However, this attempt to pacify the public did little to address the problem. Shortly after the report was released in 1955, a riot between rival gangs occurred in the vicinity of Robson and Seymour Streets and involved more than 100 youths and young adults.[106]

Although there were few injuries in the Robson and Seymour riot, concern over youth gangs continued to surge. This, in turn, prompted the Vancouver police to declare war on gangs in an effort to drive them from the city.[107] It is doubtful whether the police were successful in their efforts. Police activities appeared to aggravate rather than ameliorate the gang problem. A near riot situation occurred on Granville Street in 1956 when a police officer made a routine stop of an automobile full of youths.[108] This event supports the notion

that the situation was anything but stable. Residents and
workers from Granville Street claimed that the problems in the
area were caused by gangs of "drag racing punks" in "Hot-rods"
who seemed to emulate zoot suit gangs.[109] As well, reported
incidents of random violence, theft and vandalism amongst
unidentified gangs appeared to increase[110] despite an emphasis
on repressive law enforcement measures promoted by the police
and city council.[111] In one violent confrontation between
rival gangs, a youth was stabbed outside the "It Cafe" at
Hastings and Garden Street.[112]

By 1957 gang activity in Vancouver was on the decline.
The activities that did occur appeared to focus on inter-gang
battles and violence against bystanders and victims who
attempted to deter gang members from pursuing gang related
activities.[113] Two salient events signalled the beginning of
the end of this surge of activity. In one notable incident, a
woman was assaulted by a gang with "duck cuts" after giving
first aid to a youth who had been attacked with a knife in a
gang fight.[114] The second incident involved another near-riot
situation between unidentified gangs at the corner of Hawkes
and Georgia Streets involving more than 200 youths. The
police arrived and dispersed the gangs before serious violence
erupted.[115]

Despite the decline in gang activity, there was a renewed

call for law and order in Vancouver by the B.C. Police Commission. Commissioner C.C. Merritt argued, unsuccessfully, that juvenile hoodlums should receive the same sentences and treatment as adults when they had broken the law.[116] Although this call appeared to be somewhat late in the day, given the decline in gang activity, it coincided with the appearance of changes in Vancouver gangs which would become the hallmark of the next wave of activity.

WAVE III, PARK GANGS, FASCIST GANGS AND POLITICS

By the late 1950s, youth gangs in Vancouver began to experience a transformation. These changes were subtle at first but increased in scope to include fascist and political affiliations.

The Emergence Of Park Gangs.

The first change relates to gang identification. By the end of the 1950s and beginning in the 1960s gangs began to be identified according to their community origin or territory, principally community parks. The hoodlum gangs of the 1950s were yielding to "park gangs". The first reported incident involving a park gang was noted when a near riot situation occurred between the Grandview Park gang and an unidentified rival gang. More than 80 juveniles and youths had rallied to engage in warfare by the time police arrived to disperse the crowd.[117]

Shortly after their identification, concern over park gangs escalated. In addition to the Grandview Park Gang, gangs from Victoria and Kingsway (the "Vic Gang" from Little Chicago), Clark Park, and Memorial Park West (Dunbar) were identified as "threats to society".[118] It appeared that the targets of these gangs had expanded beyond the purview of rival gangs to include innocent victims. The unprovoked assaults of several children, including young girls, in several parks prompted park officials to demand that the hoodlums be banished from the city.[119]

The second change relates to the evolution of youth gang characteristics and practices. First, although many people were offended by the high content of profanity, some gangs had developed their own language.[120] Second, some gangs were involved, either directly or indirectly, with the distribution and use of illegal drugs.[121] Other gangs were involved in the distribution of illegally obtained non-illegal drugs. Sixteen members of a juvenile gang, aged 14 - 19, were arrested for the illegal importation of cigarettes and beer from Point Roberts in the United States for distribution in Vancouver.[122] Third, gangs had developed their own style of dress. Most gang members wore black leather jackets and denim blue jeans and many wore their hair unfashionably long.[123] Fourth, it appears that a code of silence developed amongst members of the gangs. If apprehended by police, a gang member would not

divulge any information about his comrades.[124] Fifth, there is evidence to suggest that some gangs chose visible minorities as targets of violence. In one incident, four Italian immigrants were brutally assaulted by an East End gang.[125] Sixth, some gangs used threats of violence to recruit juveniles in order to increase their gang membership. In one report, the parents of children attending McGee High School claimed their children were afraid to return to school due to threats of violence.[126] Finally, gang membership had expanded to include females. These gangs did not appear to be as violent as their all male counterparts; however, over a period of approximately three months, one of these gangs was considered responsible for 127 break-ins.[127]

The third change in Vancouver gangs relates to the indiscriminate, and somewhat inappropriate, application of the generic label "young hoodlum gangs" to groups of youths in public places. By the end of the 1950s, gangs of young hoodlums had disappeared and had been replaced by park gangs. Nevertheless, there are two examples of such inaccurate gang labelling which appear to reflect either inappropriate blaming engendered by public fear of gangs or the perceived need for a scapegoat. The first example relates to a high school beach party where the participants were accused of engaging in a "drunken sex orgy". In reality, the beach party had not been a "drunken sex orgy"; rather, it had been invaded by a "gang

of young hoodlums". All the people involved were inaccurately accused of moral depredations by a publicity seeking reporter.[128] The second incident is a more glaring example of inappropriate labelling. During the Grey Cup football game of 1960, several hundred youths stormed the playing field prior to the end of the game. As a consequence, the game had to be cancelled 41 seconds prior to its official end.[129] The same gangs of young hoodlums responsible for gang activities in the city were accused of creating this disturbance. However, their involvement was never clearly established.

By the end of 1962 reports of gang activity had almost disappeared. Minor incidents involving gangs in Vancouver parks[130], and the other occasional gang related activities such as a small wave of street robberies[131] occurred, but they were dwarfed by other concerns. Concern over gang violence resurfaced when two female police officers were forced to seek refuge in the safety of their police cruiser after investigating a fracas involving two unidentified rival gangs.[132] This event, coupled with a random assault on another police officer by 10 gang members, appeared to increase public concern over gangs to new heights.[133] Youth violence appeared to be out of control. The removal of tolls on lower mainland bridges only exacerbated concern over the issue as other "rural" municipalities, such as North Vancouver, expressed concern that gangs would then migrate

from Vancouver to outlying areas.[134] Whether or not this was
the case is unclear. However, one highly profiled gang
related incident would establish park gangs as a distinct
force in Vancouver.

The gang related event which would leave its mark on the
city was the Halloween riot of 1963. The riot occurred in the
Dunbar area close to Kerrisdale and resembled the large scale
battles that had occurred earlier in the 1950s. As many as
300 youths, many of them from youth gangs in Kerrisdale (the
Dunbar Park Gang) and Point Grey (the Alma Dukes),
participated in the melee. In addition to the inter-gang
fighting that took place, the area around Point Grey was
subjected to a substantial amount of malicious damage. At the
end of the evening, more than 30 youths, most of them gang
members, had been arrested and several thousand dollars worth
of damage had been inflicted on public and private property.[135]

By 1964, the frequency of gang activities had diminished
to almost nothing. There were isolated incidents of park gang
activity, but the most intensive surge of park gang activity
however would not begin until 1970. Up to this time, park
gangs were to be busy fighting amongst themselves and thus
appeared to pose no real threat to society. Despite the riot
of 1963, these incidents seemed to be considered more of a
nuisance than a serious social problem.[136] Nevertheless,

concern over park gang activity in the early 1960s had led to several meetings of the Parks Board. A committee was established to study the problem chaired by Commissioner Grace McCarthy. The outcome of the meetings was a request to City Council to establish a fund to provide protection for citizens frequenting city parks.[137] The details and result of this request were never stated, presumably because violent park gang activity had virtually disappeared at the time of the request in 1965.

A Brief Encounter With Fascist Gangs: 1966.

Despite the decline of park gang activity in the mid 1960s, other types of gangs had developed, and for a brief time, occupied both public and police attention. "Fascist youth gangs" appeared as a new threat to moral order. Reports on these gangs are scant and there is no indication that they were involved with any larger fascist or anti semitic movement. However, in 1966, "fascist" or "Nazi gangs" attracted a considerable amount of attention. A gang called the "Maltese Cross" was disbanded following the arrest of its leaders. The remnants of the gang had reorganized themselves into a gang called the "Huns". The Huns comprised approximately 10 juvenile males aged 14-16 who were identified by their black leather jackets bearing the Nazi SS insignia.

The gang was primarily engaged in vandalism, assault and

a variety of status offenses. Their activities involved assaulting residents and vandalizing businesses and residences in the East End of the city, an area known for its immigrant and visible minority. composition. Members of the gang were also notorious for their sexual exploits. One of the gang was charged with two counts of having carnal knowledge of a female. Similar to the Maltese Cross, the Huns were disbanded following the arrest of five prominent members who were involved in the indecent assault of two teenage girls.[138]

The Return Of Park Gangs.

As reports of fascist gangs began to wane, park gangs reappeared as the prominent focal point for public attention. Unlike their predecessors in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the activities of these gangs were far less random. Moreover, the use of the park as a meeting place and headquarters became the new, unofficial hallmark of these gangs. Several park gangs would figure prominently in this wave that began with the English Bay riot in 1970 and which would last until 1975.

The English Bay riot occurred during Sea Festival celebrations in the summer of 1970. Following a festival dance, a "roaming crowd" of over 200 youths travelled to the corner of Denman and Davie Streets where they clashed with police.[139] To this day, the cause of the riot remains unclear, but several hypotheses were put forward. Mayor Tom Campbell

claimed that Vancouver had become a haven for vagrant youth who seemed to enjoy engaging in law violating activities.[140] Other observers claimed that the riot was organized by political activists who encouraged the riot and led their followers into battle.[141] Finally, there was some suggestion that "punk gangs" originating from local parks were the primary participants.[142]

Each of the three claims were correct to some extent. It appears that "Marxist" orientated political organizations, such as the "Yippies" and the "Vancouver Liberation Front" (VLF), were able to manipulate the park gangs into "taking back the streets" from the police. The gangs in turn were able to motivate the crowd at the Sea Festival dance to the verge of violence. However, the crowd consisted of more than gang members and vagrant youth as other, "more respectable", youth were also suspected of participating in the riot.[143]

Following the English Bay riot, Vancouver was given a reprieve from gangs but gang activity resurfaced in June of 1972 with the Rolling Stones Riot at the Pacific Coliseum. This time, park gangs figured more prominently as main players in the violence. Similar to the English Bay riot in 1970, a group identified in "The Province" as a "communist-based" political activist organization by the name of the "Youngbloods" was able to persuade several park gangs,

including gangs from Clark Park and Riley Park, to engage in activities which would fuel the riot. This was accomplished by selling imitation tickets outside of the concert and then provoking the buyers into forcing their way through the security gates when they were denied admittance. The resulting riot involved over 2,500 youth and 200 police officers.[144]

The Rolling Stones riot was only one event in the matrix of gangs and their related activities in the city at the time. Five parks with gangs were identified as trouble spots: Clark Park, Riley Park, West Point Grey Park, Memorial Park West and Memorial Park South.[145] As well, the community recreation centres in Kerrisdale and Killarney were home to problem gangs.[146] The gangs primarily comprised males aged 15-20 and rarely exceeded 30 in size. Gang members could be identified by their long hair style, denim pants, black leather or denim jackets and, in some cases, a tattoo on their forearm. At the time, it was believed that these gangs were responsible for the majority of gang activities in Vancouver, including the riots noted above.[147]

The Vancouver police had categorized the gangs into three types according to the level of criminal activity they participated in. The first two categories could be considered to be of the park gang type and the third to be of a political

activist variety. Type one gangs would meet in the park to socialize. Socializing would take the form of alcohol consumption and drug use such as marijuana smoking and glue sniffing, but these gangs were relatively harmless to the society at large. These gangs were seldom mentioned in reports of gang activity. Type two gangs, also emanating from parks, engaged in alcohol and drug use but they were also involved in organized petty crime such as car theft, breaking and entering and the occasional extortion of other youth. The park gangs emanating from Clark Park and Riley Park could be classified under this heading. In addition to petty crimes, type three gangs had political motives. Gangs such as the Youngbloods, the yippies and the VLF attempted to utilize, sometimes successfully, type one and two gangs as a means for their political ends. In both the English Bay Riot and the "Rolling Stones Riot" type three gangs were deemed responsible for orchestrating the event through the use of park gangs. According to media reports, the goal of these politically orientated gangs was the destabilization and ultimate destruction of the Canadian political system so that it could be replaced by communism. Whether this goal was the actual mandate of the gangs or merely media speculation is unclear. However, it is doubtful that a goal of such magnitude was shared by more than just a few of the fanatical leaders of the gangs as many of the gang members considered their activities "fun".[148]

Following the Rolling Stones Riot in 1972, reports of park gang activity appeared, but in diminishing numbers. Although conflict between park gangs and citizens had not disappeared, confrontations between park gangs and the police dominated reports as police sought to control them. In one notable incident, two police officers required hospitalization after a violent confrontation with eight members of the Clark Park gang.[149]

Despite the furore created by park gangs, gang activity in Vancouver began to wane in 1974 and disappeared completely by 1976. There were reports of incidents involving these gangs, but these focused primarily on determining the cause and, more often, the solution to this social problem.[150] Other groups of youth were accused of engaging in park gang style behaviour, but these accusations appeared to be erroneous. Gangs of homeless street youth attempted to emulate park gangs by robbing and intimidating pedestrians in Gastown and on Granville Street using knives and threats of violence. However, these "Beggar gangs" (a term used by the police) were not organized and were easily controlled by police.[151]

POST WAVE III DEVELOPMENTS: 1973-1985

Coinciding with the disappearance of park gangs in the mid 1970s was the emergence of a new gang trend in Vancouver's Chinatown. Once again the face of gang activity in the city

would be transformed. The media began to report the activities of organized criminal gangs which seemed to consist mainly of young adults. At that time, little was known about these gangs except that they extorted money from the Chinese community. Even though Chinatown was considered a closed to outside (i.e. police) influence, leaders of the community approached the police for assistance to eliminate the gangs.[152] Shortly thereafter, a 26 year old Chinatown gang boss, Kwok Kin Wong, was jailed for extortion. It was believed that Wong had connections with a Hong Kong based triad in San Francisco and that he was the leader of a 25-30 member youth gang in Vancouver.[153]

At the time of Wong's arrest, five Asian gangs were identified: the Ching Wah, Lotus Family, Jung Ching, Gum Bong and Seven Wolves. These gangs were involved in extortion activities in Chinatown.[154] Intimidation and violence were frequently used by most of the gangs in their extortion bids.[155] Of interest is the origins of two gangs. The Ching Wah and the Jung Ching were believed to have emerged from legitimate soccer teams when the members became unable to participate at the same level of competition.[156]

After the initial attention to Asian gangs in Chinatown in the mid 1970s, they seemed to disappear. The nature and extent of these gangs is unclear. Indeed, their activities

can be considered a prelude to the surge of gang activity that began in the mid 1980s. Concern over Asian gangs exploded in 1985 following the kidnapping and murder of restaurant owner Jimmy Ming and his wife Lily. The attempt to extort money from the Ming family failed as they were unable to comply with the kidnapper's demands for $700,000. The dead bodies of the two victims were found several weeks after the family had published a plea for mercy in the local newspaper.[158]

Concern over youth gangs, Asian and non Asian alike, continues to occupy both media and public attention. As noted by Girrard (1992) the events of 1985 marked the beginning of a diverse amount of gang activity in Vancouver which is not limited to Asian gangs. Several other types of gangs have emerged each with its own distinctive characteristics and activities. Whether or not this latest surge of gang activity will involve a return of the various gangs and gang activities from 1973 to 1985 is unclear.[157]

(Articles From "The Province")

1. For the purposes of analysis, the term "youth gang" also refers to "youth groups" as operationalized in Appendix B.

2. 11/23/09   1   Thieving boys do big business in crime

3. 09/21/12   1   White boys raid Chinatown youth

4. 10/16/24   26 Young hoodlums set fire to south Vancouver block

5. 07/19/24   28 Suspect boy bandit gang

6. 08/12/24   28 Solving corner gang problem

7. 08/29/25   22 Police arrest nine youths

8. 08/21/25   1   'Auto truck gang' caught by police after hot chase

9. 07/19/24   28 Suspect boy bandit gang

10. 10/16/24   26 Young hoodlums set fire to south Vancouver block

11. 04/20/30   1   Arrest juvenile after mile chase

12. 04/30/28   3   Gang of boys under arrest

13. 01/08/31   1   Boy bandits arrested

14. 10/21/35   1   Long terms imposed on holdup men

15. 05/01/24   7   Youths accused of being corner loungers remanded to tuesday

16. 01/06/30   26 Girl is charged as bandit gang member

17. 06/22/31   4   Girl in gang of gasoline bandits

18. 01/04/40   14 Vandalism due to hoodlums

19. 08/21/42   5   Boys' clubs curb juvenile delinquency

20. 01/04/40   14 Vandalism due to hoodlums

21. 08/30/44   2   Gang threats fail to frighten young witness

22. Vancouver's population increased substantially between the first and second waves of gang activity from 163,000 in 1921 to 275,353 in 1941 (Bridges, 1976).

23. Bridges (1976) notes that by 1941 the municipal districts in the Lower Mainland area of B.C. accounted for 20.6% of the population compared to 15.8% in 1921. Also, Davis (1976) notes the move towards industrialisation in Vancouver's work force as a result of Canada's efforts in World War II.

24. 08/01/44 1-2 Tipsy Tar's tall tale started Zoot riot Appier, J. (1990). Juvenile Crime Control: Los Angeles Law Enforcement And The Zoot Suit Riots. Criminal Justice History, (II), p.147-170.

25. 07/31/44   1 Police quell "Zoot" battle

26. 08/01/44 1-2 Tipsy Tar's tall tale started Zoot riot

27. 10/10/44   7 Zoot-Suiters, sailors mix in street brawl

28. 08/01/44 1-2 Tipsy Tar's tall tale started Zoot riot

29. 10/21/46 1-2 Police drive on juveniles

30. 06/23/45   3 Tire thieves on rampage

31. 10/21/46 1-2 Police drive on juveniles

32. ibid

33. 02/28/47 1-2 (Mason, Don) New 'fagin' hinted city gang leader

    02/28/47   2 Gang sought as factor in shooting

34. The term "Happyland" has changed to "Playland" and is located at the Pacific National Exhibition grounds in Vancouver.

35. 06/09/47 1-2 10 held in gang 'war' here

36. 06/10/47 1-2 Youths warned fined $10

37. ibid

38. 08/26/48   1 Police to halt hoodlums

39. 03/22/49 1-3 Kind hand is Joe's

40. 11/24/49 17 New violence sweeps youth

41. 11/15/49 11 Mulligan warns youth gangs

42. ibid

43. The term "springblade" is what is now identified as "switch blade".

44. 11/15/49 11 Mulligan warns youth gangs

45. ibid

46. 11/23/49 1-2 Knifers stir parents' ire

47. 11/24/49 17 New violence sweeps youth

48. 11/22/49   1 Hoodlumism committee to be formed

49. 12/01/49 25 Youth recreation survey suggested

50. ibid
     12/08/49   2 'Humdinger' of rally to discuss hoodlums

51. 03/27/50   1 Hoodlums outwitted by police

52. 12/01/49 25 Youth recreation survey suggested
     See also: Gordon, R. and Young, M. (1993). Youth Gangs
in Vancouver: Some Observations From A Research
Programme. Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.:
     unpublished paper.

53. 03/11/50 1-2 Boy gangs brawling on streets

54. 04/28/50 21 Armed hoodlums panic when defied by couple

55. 03/15/50 21 Police busy quelling rowdyism

56. 04/04/50   7 Third youth convicted after fracas

57. 03/18/50   1 Six held as youths kick up

58. 03/22/50   1 Attempted arson laid to gangs

59. 03/24/50 17 Hoodlums spoil school dances

60. 01/27/50   1 These hoodlums boast of criminal careers

61. 01/30/50   2 Boy tells of extortion

62. 02/08/50   1 Juveniles convicted of assault

63. 07/09/51 13 Violence outbreak marks city weekend

64. 07/03/50 1-2   Armed gangs plague city

65. ibid

66. 03/27/50   1   Hoodlums outwitted by police

67. 04/10/50 13   Police busy checking rowdyism

68. 07/12/51 17   Police seek Zoot-Suiters

69. 04/03/50   3   Zoot suit bandits in hold up

70. 02/14/51 1-2   'Dog-haired' Zoot-Suiter trio debate death
                   of truck driver

71. 08/06/51 1-2   7 hurt, 2 held in Zoot attack

72. 08/10/51   1   (Larsen, Bruce) City Zoot-Suiters hit new
                   low

73. 04/18/50 1-2   (Moyer, Ed) Rowdyism cut in half
    12/04/51   2   Knifing follows Zoot-Suiter warning

74. 04/18/50 1-2   (Moyer, Ed) Rowdyism cut in half

75. 01/07/52 13   Eight youths charged with 18 house
                   robberies

76. 02/11/52   2   Vicious hoodlums rob, wreck house

77. 02/06/52 21   Misdeeds of juveniles keep city busy

78. 12/04/51   2   Knifing fight follows Zoot-Suiter warning.
    02/18/52   5   Hoodlum violence flares again
    03/24/52   6   Young hoodlumism continues

79. 02/18/52   6   Action urged against 'Zooters'

80. 03/28/52   8   Young vandal jailed

81. 03/11/50 1-2   Police provide guidance for youth

82. 03/18/50   1   Six held as youths kick up

83. 03/24/50 17   Hoodlums spoil school dances

84. 08/21/50   1   Hoodlums suspected in drowning

85. 10/28/50 21   Hoodlums warned by police

86. 01/03/51   3   (Hazlitt, Tom) Juvenile crime still a
                   problem but youngsters 'pretty sound'

87. 07/09/51   13   Violence outbreak marks city weekend

88. 12/28/51 1-2   Teenage hoodlums nabbed by police

89. 02/06/52   21   Misdeeds of juveniles keep city police busy

90. 08/12/52   2   Youths fined; 1 jailed for assault on
                      street

91. 04/29/54   5   'Sign of the Zoot' vanishing rapidly say
                      B.C. principals at convention

92. 01/05/55   23   Arrest of teenagers may end burglaries

93. 12/06/55   1-2   Violence under control

94. 02/07/56   17   Teen-age crack down continues

95. ibid

96. 11/21/57   19   Vicious gang mauls woman over knifing

97. 08/26/54   1,4   Arrest man at wife's bedside
    09/27/54   8   Gang of youths robs, beats man
    01/05/55   23   Arrest of teenagers may end burglaries

98. 12/21/56   29   Youth burglary gang smashed

99. 12/06/55   1-2   Violence under control

100. 05/02/55   21   Gang fight sends youth to hospital
     08/16/55   1   Police stop 'gang warfare' before it starts
     10/17/55   19   Gang brawl injures policeman
     12/10/55   1   Young hoodlums riot in streets
     01/24/56   19   'Hot spot' loiterers give police headache
     08/04/56   1-2   Gang cleanup urged
     08/13/56   2   Police curb hoodlums
     06/07/57   1   Fifty charges facing Fraserview teen gang

101. 01/24/56   19   'Hot spot' loiterers give police headache

102. 11/21/55   21   Police battle wave of juvenile violence

103. 12/06/55   1-2   Violence under control

104. 12/10/55   1   Young hoodlums riot in streets

105. 01/14/56   1-2   Hoodlums out of city

106. 08/04/56   1-2   Gang cleanup urged

107. ibid

108. 02/07/56   17   Teen-age crack down continues
     04/23/56   1   Motorist beaten up by drinking youths
     05/22/56   27   Youths force driver to flee
     06/16/56   1   Hoodlums attack graduation party
     08/06/56   17   'Get tough' policy set for city's hoodlums
     09/18/56 1-2   Police drive on hoodlums

109. 04/24/56   21   Police to crack down on young hoodlums

110. 05/02/56   21   Police to crackdown on young hoodlums

111. 01/12/57   23   Four attacked on street; youths injured in
                     brawls
     03/25/57   21   Young thugs smash party
     06/21/57   1   Police quell hoodlums; three held

112. 11/21/57   19   Vicious gang mauls woman over knifing

113. 05/31/57   3   Revolt in our streets
     10/14/58   21   Boy stabbed, teen battle investigated

114. 01/10/58   21   Adult penalty urged for young hooligans

115. 09/26/59   1   Gang fight averted here

116. 08/12/61   2   Police concern mounts as attack wave grows
     08/14/61 1-2   (Holme, John) Hoodlumism hits a vicious
                     peak-police helpless
     10/07/63   27   50 youths in melee at party

117. ibid
     07/30/63   15   Hoodlums beat, kick two men

118. 12/15/58   25   Gangs attack three in city

119. 05/06/58   17   Youths, drug addict accused in burglaries

120. 10/19/59   1   Juvenile gang, girl friends arrested after
                     boarder raid

121. 06/11/60   17   (Strickland, Jack) 'Lay off youth-they're
                     not so bad!'
     11/28/60 1-2   (Hazlitt, Tom) Hoodlums on field stop game

122. 03/08/62   3   Youth silent about other gang pals

123. 07/09/60   2   Thugs beat immigrants

124. 09/21/60   2   High gang 'terrifying' youngsters

125. 11/10/62   3   Girl gang amasses $3,500

126. 05/20/60   1   Storm waves still wash around Sun's beach
                    sex story

127. 11/28/60 1-2 (Hazlitt, Tom) Hoodlums on field stop game

128. 07/10/63   3   Police act to curb park rowdyism
     07/11/63 17   City parents may police playgrounds

129. 09/15/61   3   Street robberies rising

130. 07/09/62   1   Policewomen saved from teen-age mob

131. 02/25/63   3   4 policemen hurt in gang attacks by young
                    hoodlums

132. 02/27/63   3   Free bridges start worries over hoodlums

133. 11/01/63 1-2 Goblins' big night fizzles

134. 06/15/65   2   Hoodlum problem in parks

135. ibid

136. 05/18/66   2   Five 'Huns' remanded in attack on two girls
     06/10/66   8   'Huns' under suspicion in attack on girl,
                    15

137. 07/15/70 1-2 (Bridge, Maurice) City warns youngsters to
                    cool it

138. 07/16/70 1,13 (Manning, Pat) Punk gangs take over English
                    Bay

139. 07/13/70 1-2 Rocks and bottles fly as youths pelt police

140. 07/16/70 1,13 (Manning, Pat) Punk gangs take over English
                    Bay

141. 07/16/70   1   (Smith, Nathan) Police to beef up patrols

142. 07/22/72   6   East enders are hard core

143. ibid

144. 07/22/72 5-6 (Spears, James) Gangs 'glue' and Mao
     11/19/73 27   (Hendrickson, Bob) Teens bored-youth
                    workers

145. 07/22/72 5-6 (Spears, James) Gangs 'glue' and Mao
     07/27/74 64   Age breaking up that old gang

146. ibid

147. 09/18/72 23 Policemen injured by street rowdies

148. 10/06/72 1-2 (Hrushowy, Pat) 'Big brother' may keep tabs
                    on delinquents

149. 04/16/73   2 Beggar gangs bug pedestrians
     06/12/73 21 Knife, street begging curbs sought by
                    police commission

150. 02/17/73 1,27 (Hendrickson, Bob) The Chinatown patrol

151. 02/13/74   8 (Simons, Ed) Chinatown 'gang boss' jailed 9
                    months

152. ibid
     02/04/78   4 (Bell, Dennis) Chinatown helps police put
                    lid on youth gangs
     Also, Dubro (1992) links the rise of Asian youth gangs in
     Vancouver in the mid 1970s to the influence of organized
     crime syndicates (triads) emanating from Hong Kong and
     San Francisco. His analysis also validates the
     discussion on the circumstances surrounding the original
     Asian gangs, their names and their activities.

153. ibid

154. ibid

155. 03/20/85   5 Mings think of others

156. Girrard, M. (1992). The Print Media's Portrayal Of The
     Youth Gang Phenomenon In British Columbia. School of
     Criminology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby B.C.:
     unpublished B.A. (hons.) thesis.

CHAPTER IV

WHY YOUTH GANGS APPEAR: EXPLANATIONS AND CONJECTURES

This chapter explores the explanations offered to account
for the phenomenon of youth gangs in Vancouver. The analysis
will proceed with the examination of popular "common sense"
explanations reported in "The Province" newspaper for the
three waves of gang activity identified in Chapter III and for
the period following the third wave of activity (1973 - 1985).
Any overlap between these explanations and the explanations
emerging from the literature review in Chapter II will be
identified.[1] Following this, alternative explanations will be
analyzed as they relate to the hypotheses emerging from the
work of Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992).

Before the discussion can proceed, three issues related
to the analysis need to be examined. First, the combination
of Spergel's (1990) inward migration and Lee's (1992)
unemployment hypotheses was selected for two primary reasons:
(i), both of these hypotheses appear in lay explanations of
youth gangs in "The Province"; and (ii), the themes inherent
in these hypotheses also appear in the academic literature on
youth gangs. It should be noted that the explanations
appearing in "The Province" and the development of the
theories appearing in the literature have not always emerged
at the same time.

There are other explanations that appeared in "The Province" that also appear in some of the academic literature. Two salient examples illustrate this point: (i) problem families are often identified with gang formation; and (ii) youths are more likely to participate in gang activity if they come from a marginalized community or group. Despite the frequency of these two explanations, "The Province" did not provide the necessary supporting data. These two factors first appeared during the "Corner Lounger Gang" period and seemed to be recycled whenever other explanations were absent, or they appeared inadequate.

The absence of significant gang activity prior to the 1920s precludes a review of explanations appearing between 1900 and 1920. In 1901 the population of Vancouver was only 28,530; however, by 1921 this number had increased almost fourfold to 107,106 (Census Canada 1921). While it is true that gang activity did occur prior to the 1920s and that gang activity does occur in smaller cities, it is doubtful that it was organized or consistent. Vancouver was a small, developing city in the early 20th century which may account for the apparent absence of gangs or recorded gang activity. A city's size and stage of development are factors to be considered when attempting to determine gang presence.

The final issue relating to the analysis deals with the

most recent wave of gang activity in Vancouver. As indicated in the preceding chapter, an in depth analysis of this wave is beyond the scope of this discussion. Data on this wave of gang activity are incomplete because Vancouver is still in the midst of it.

POPULAR EXPLANATIONS OF GANGS IN THE PRINT MEDIA
WAVE I. "CORNER LOUNGER GANGS": 1924-1931.

The furore and anxiety resulting from "corner lounger" activity received a substantial amount of attention in Vancouver. There was much discussion on the nuisance these gangs caused and the anxiety they provoked amongst the public, but few explanations were offered to account for the phenomenon. The explanations that were offered appeared to reflect the concerns of Vancouver citizens and were devoid of any sign of Thrasher's (1936) inward migration thesis, the most prominent theory of the time, which emerged after his research on gangs in the 1920s. This is not surprising considering the site of Thrasher's (1936) gang research – Chicago – and the relatively small population of Vancouver at that time.

Following the identification of "corner loungers" as a social problem, two brief discussions in "The Province" summarized the attitude of the public at the time. The first of these explanations was an implicit, albeit simplistic,

assumption that these gangs comprised "bad boys" up to "no good" while the second approached the problem from an educational and economic perspective. Educators from the Collingwood area argued that many youths did not continue their education past the legal requirement of age fifteen. As a result, these individuals had poor employment prospects which led to an excess of unoccupied time and a distinct lack of money.[2] "Corner lounger" activities occupied that spare time and, quite often, supplied money.

Compared to the explanations offered at the beginning of the "corner lounger" period, the unemployment thesis was insightful for its time. Although this lay explanation was slightly ahead of academic publications, it appeared to identify social disorganization as a factor in gang formation, a theory developed in the early 1940s by Shaw and McKay (1943).

As the first wave of gang activity in Vancouver began to wane other explanations for gangs emerged. One of these explanations focused on the influence of adult criminals on young people. Organized crime appeared to be a problem in Vancouver and one barrister argued that organized crime syndicates were corrupting youth by employing them as "professional" thieves.[3] The second explanation offered relates to the comments of a noted "child-saver" of the time,

George Spurgeon. Spurgeon argued that 'bad boys' who committed juvenile delinquency and participated in gangs came from problem families. More specifically, Spurgeon claimed that a distinct lack of discipline and inadequate mothering were responsible for these societal problems.[4]

The "role modelling" and "problem families" theses also appeared to be ahead of their time. With respect to academic explanations, theories in this vein did not appear until Rogers' multiple factor theory in the mid 1940s (Rogers, 1945).

WAVE II. "ZOOT SUIT" AND "HOODLUM" GANGS: 1944-1959.

By the beginning of the second wave of activity in 1944, youth gangs, hooligans and young hoodlums were recognized as social problems. Advocates of community recreational facilities and programs argued that juvenile delinquency and hooliganism could be substantially curtailed by involving youth in outdoor recreation programs.[5] Youth workers argued that young people engaged in gang behaviour because they were bored.[6] This explanation was echoed by Rogers' (1945) work on gangs in Toronto. The explanation, however, did not appear to account for the emergence of "zoot suit" gangs.

The battles between merchant seamen and zoot suit gangs were apparently the result of a feud between the two

factions.[7] Although it may be possible that members of zoot
suit gangs experienced boredom which may have exacerbated the
tensions between the two groups, another more salient factor
needs to be considered. The zoot suit gang phenomenon
extended past the boundaries of Vancouver, and beyond the
province for that matter. There were several zoot suit gangs
in more than one city in Canada. Almost every large urban
centre in the country was host to zoot suit gangs. In
addition, there is mention of zoot suit riots in Los Angeles,
California in 1943.[8]

By the end of the war, reports on gangs were littered
with explanations accounting for the phenomenon. Lay or
"common sense" explanations are noted along with both quasi
professional and professional explanations. A popular theme,
and one that would frequently re-emerge, was offered by F.
Aberdeen, a Kiwanis' leader. Similar to Rogers' (1945)
conclusions about gangs in Toronto, Aberdeen claimed that the
lack of proper recreational facilities and trained youth
leaders impeded a concerted effort to deal with the gang
problem. Aberdeen went on to suggest that the morality of
boys and young men was being corrupted by bootleggers who sold
them alcohol. Coupled with the lack of recreational
facilities, this practice only increased the rate of moral
decay amongst the boys.[9]

Not surprisingly, the notion that "moral decay" was indeed the overarching factor leading to gang formation and participation was never clearly established. However, the argument that youth were being corrupted by adults was supported following the robberies of several military establishments and the fatal shooting of two police officers. Following intensive investigation, both police and military officials hypothesized that an underworld or organized crime group was recruiting youth gangs and training them in the art of crime so they could carry out the armoury robberies. Ironically, the reports of these incidents did not make a connection between the weapons thefts and the possibility that the gangs could have been building an arsenal for the purpose of future bank and business robberies.[10]

Despite the demise of the gangs involved in the armoury robberies, gangs continued to manifest themselves in Vancouver. With these manifestations came more explanations for the phenomenon, some new and others a variation on old themes. One of the more persistent explanations put forth by lay persons and professionals alike, and one not found in any academic explanations at the time, was the notion that youth abused the freedom they enjoyed and had no regard for the law. If this were true, then more control of youth activities and punishment for those youth who disregarded the law would seem a logical course of action.

Indeed, this is the approach adopted by the police and one which received unchallenged support from all levels of municipal government and much of the citizenry. What followed was a repressive set of police policies targeting youth gangs and juvenile delinquency in general. Chief Mulligan of the Vancouver Police released a statement outlining this new approach and his warning to gangs,

> "Vancouver police have ended their "kid glove" policy
> toward juvenile offenders in an effort to combat "rampant
> vandalism, organized teen-age gangs, uncontrollable
> partying and drinking orgies"...Chief Constable Walter
> Mulligan today said that "instead of warnings, we're
> going to lay charges" and, starting with the toughest
> gang, "we're going to eradicate" the law flaunting
> element".[11]

However, not all agencies involved with youth shared Mulligan's view. A spokesperson for probation officers argued that the "cure" to the gang "problem" was in prevention not just prosecution. Moreover, he claimed that youths modelled adults; if adults set a bad example, how could youth be expected to do otherwise?[12] Chief Mulligan was forced to concede that law enforcement alone was insufficient as a means to deal with gangs. He supported the notion of prevention promoted by probation officers and suggested that a committee be formed to study recreational facilities in Vancouver.[13] Thus, the corollary to the prevention argument was the re-emergence of the "unoccupied time" thesis that first appeared during the "corner lounger" era. If youth were busy with acceptable activities they would not have the time, nor the

inclination, to engage in gang activity.

Efforts to implement the two approaches did not appear to have any immediate impact on gang participation or activities. Little or no attention was directed towards youth facilities and repressive police policies only appeared to exacerbate gang formation and activities. Chief Mulligan responded to accusations of police incompetence by claiming that the media were guilty of "...overplaying minor incidents..." of gang activity.[14]

The manifest crisis posed by gangs, and the inability of the Vancouver police to deal with them, engendered the formation of a "Youth Guidance Division (YGD). The YGD comprised selected police officers who would tackle the gang "problem" on two fronts: one, attempt to break up the gangs; and two, prevent gang activity from occurring.[15] Interestingly, this method of dealing with gangs was first developed by Thrasher (1936) as a way to reduce gangs in Chicago during the 1920s.

The apparent success of the suppressive and preventative measures utilized by the YGD allowed the citizens and various professionals of Vancouver to assess the "problem" of gangs in an effort to determine the cause(s) of the phenomenon, and presumably, the cure. The more mainstream notions, that too

much unoccupied time and a lack of recreational facilities were the "cause", resurfaced. However, a variation on this explanation, emphasizing the need for positive role models for youth, also emerged. It was suggested that negative role models, such as bootleggers and adult organized syndicates, were responsible for the moral corruption of young people. Chief Mulligan of the Vancouver police claimed there was,

> "Need for 'good and efficient' leadership to organized teen-aged gangs to 'steer them to social objectives' rather than 'trying to break them up by police action'...".[16]

As well, other more enlightened explanations emerged. The first of these explanations originated with a spokesperson for the Vancouver Labour Council (VLC). In addition to suggesting that more recreational facilities were required, the representative indicated that Vancouver youth had poor educational prospects.[17] Poor employment prospects would have been the result of this situation and it is clear that unemployment affected adolescents more severely than any other group following the end of World War II.[18]

Another explanation relates to Mulligan's criticism of the media and their role in printing sensationalist reports of youth gangs. Although the media's role in the creation and perpetuation of deviance had not been addressed by academics at this time, the work of Roger's was once again being applied to gangs in Vancouver. A spokesperson for Vancouver probation

officers echoed Mulligan's comments and added that broken
homes, divorces and legal separations accounted for much youth
related crime including gang activity.[19]

A third explanation relates to the notion of prevention,
rather than suppression, of gang behaviour. The Weir
Committee Report of 1948 concluded that vandalism, petty crime
and gang warfare could be prevented if the province
established community centres.[20] Moreover, the "problems"
encountered with gangs during the late 1940s and early 1950s
could have been mitigated, if not completely avoided, if the
recommendations in the report had been accepted and adopted at
the time it was submitted to the provincial government.[21]
Instead, the report was tabled for two years before coming to
the public's attention.

The final explanation noted was offered at a conference
for social workers at Vancouver in 1950. An expert on
juvenile delinquency from the United States, Saul Bernstein,
delivered an address in which he argued that recreational
programs could be useful in thwarting gang formation and
activities, but that they should be augmented by psychiatric
treatment and confinement if necessary. Bernstein also noted
that joining a gang was a normal activity for boys. The
"danger" of gang membership occurred when the boy sought
psychological and emotional refuge in the gang due to a lack

of understanding in the home.[22]

The exception to the explanations noted above was zoot suit gangs. Youths participating in these gangs were considered "morally inferior".[23] Their marginal status was emphasized at a convention of high school principals where they suggested that,

"Its significant that boys and girls who dress that way are the least desirable part of the school population. They are usually short on brains and have poor home backgrounds. They don't usually stay at school beyond compulsory age".[24]

Not surprisingly, the growing concern over a "communist contamination" of youth in Canada at the time was manifested in discussions around these gangs. Senator Tom Reid of New Westminster argued that youth in these gangs would be the first to join the growing Canadian communist movement. Moreover, he suggested that punishment of convicted "zoot suit" members be as severe as the law would allow in order to thwart the menacing activities of these gangs which frightened and intimidated all citizens, including the police.[25]

As the second wave of gang activity was beginning to wane, the number of new explanations offered to account for the phenomenon also declined. Moreover, the explanations did not differ substantially from those of previous years and appeared to have their roots in the work of Rogers (1945). In

response to a "gang crime wave" in 1954, Deputy Chief Ambrose
of the Vancouver police claimed that unemployment was the root
cause of crime (gang activity) while in the same context,
Chief Mulligan argued that organized gangs, not the
unemployed, were responsible.[26]

In addition to the unemployment thesis, other "standby"
explanations were also advanced. The issue of unoccupied
spare time and the lack of recreational facilities and
adequate leadership for youth and boys' clubs was again
noted.[27] As well, an opinion poll revealed that a majority of
Vancouver residents believed "lax" parenting to be the cause
of gangs.[28] Third, it was argued that the YGD of the
Vancouver police was too small to deal effectively with the
gang "problem" and that their efforts should be combined with
neighbourhood groups such as the Parent-Teacher Council (PTC).
A PTC representative suggested that more cooperation between
the police and community agencies would allow for the
detection of the circumstances leading to gang formation. The
problem could then be dealt with before it became serious.[29]
The repressive measures used by the police up to that time,
including the "War on Gangs", were not viewed as desirable and
neither were preventative measures. Some criminal justice
system professionals maintained that harsher penalties would
eliminate gangs and their activities. Three B.C. magistrates
called for more severe punishment of teen-age gangs. Aside

from incarceration, they argued that whipping would send a message to both youth and society that hoodlumism would not be tolerated.[30] Others, such as the police commission, argued that juvenile hooligans should be sent to adult rather than juvenile court "...when laws have been 'flouted'".[31] This opinion dovetailed with that of Police Chief Archer who claimed that attacks on citizens were most often undertaken by youths intent on robbery, for either money or automobiles, and the attacks on police officers were by thrill seeking youths searching for "kicks".[32]

WAVE III. PARK GANGS, FASCIST GANGS AND POLITICS: 1959-1975

The third wave of gang activity in Vancouver witnessed a change in the explanations for youth gangs. Although few explanations were offered during the beginning of this wave, the role of the mass media re-emerged as a factor in the perpetuation of gang activity. An officer of the YGD in Vancouver argued that the media's attention and portrayal of youth gang "rowdyism" actually exacerbated the problem. With respect to the role of the media, one Sergeant Hornell was quoted to have said, "I'm inclined to think publicizing these things causes them to spread". Hornell went on to argue that alcohol consumption was a major contributor to youth crime. While intoxicated, youths engaged in activities they would otherwise avoid.[33]

Hornell's comments appeared to be levelled at the gangs already identified during this period. However, it is doubtful that his assumptions were applicable to the two new types of gangs which emerged: "park gangs" and "fascist gangs". Although these two varieties of gangs differed in activities and agendas, they had one major similarity: both emerged in the East End of Vancouver, an area known for its lower socio-economic status and immigrant populations.

Despite the increasing diversity of gangs and gang activity during this period, the adoption of academic theory to explain them was minimal. On one occasion, there is specific mention of factors leading to the formation of gangs and gang activity relating to role modelling. Otherwise, reports on gangs during this period are devoid of academic theorizing. Interestingly, there is at least one concrete mention of culture conflict being a factor in gang attacks in the early 1960s when an unidentified gang attacked a group of four Italian immigrants.[34] However, culture conflict theory was not applied to gangs until the 1980s when Moore (1984) conducted research on "Chicano" gangs in California. Moreover, it is unlikely that culture conflict theory could account for the appearance of fascist gangs.[35]

As the intensity of the third wave of gang activity increased with the "English Bay Riot" and the "Rolling Stones

Riot", so too did the attention to explanations offered to account for the behaviour. In contrast to previous explanations, notably that youth needed more recreational facilities, the third wave witnessed the rebirth of the notion that youth needed guidance. This guidance would, hopefully, reduce the problems caused by park gangs who had adopted park recreation facilities as meeting and combat areas, and thwart efforts by radical organizations to use these gangs as they had during the "English Bay Riot". It was suggested that gang activities in general, and disturbances such as the riot, could be avoided if youth workers were in the community and able to guide youth towards law abiding objectives.[36]

The "guidance" thesis appears in the works of both Spergel (1966) and Klein (1971) where they argue that, when combined with other factors, "poor" role models can lead to the formation of gangs. This explanation, however, is the only academic work that can be identified in the explanations that appear in this era.

Although the community youth worker programme achieved temporary success in reducing some gang activity[37], it was ineffective at preventing the "Rolling Stones Riot" in 1972. The "Rolling Stones Riot" was apparently caused by a politically orientated Maoist "gang" called the "Youngbloods". As indicated in Chapter III, the "Youngbloods" attempted to

use "park gangs" to further their own communist agenda. In

the main, the threat posed by the "Youngbloods", and groups

similar to them, was not treated seriously. However, concern

over the use of gangs as instruments of social disorder was

highlighted when Police Superintendent Ted Oliver stated that,

with respect to gang structure in Vancouver, "...there is

'positive evidence' that there are people 'interested in civil

disorder' who have contacted the gangs and given instructions

in creating riots".[38]

In response to fears of the contamination of youth by

radical, political or communist forces, columnist Eric Nicol

argued that,

> "Today's youth is romantically underprivileged-romance in
> the sense of the heroic and adventurous. The new worlds
> to conquer are either cerebral or unable to accommodate
> more than two passengers of the lunar buggy...So the
> young hotspur gang up to crock a cop. They find a
> temporary allegiance to anarchy, a camaraderie in fellow
> rioters. Having no sense of community, in the global
> village or the public places of megalopolis, they unleash
> the rage of frustration at the visible symbols of society
> that has logged off Sherwood Forest, the refuge of the
> outlaw, and made it into plywood...Tagging these young
> people as hoodlums gives us a certain amount of semantic
> satisfaction but solves nothing at all. Somehow, we must
> provide a new frontier to which the misfit can escape,
> and prove himself a man".[39]

Thus, in contrast to the notion that park gangs were being

manipulated by communist organizations, Nicol believed that

their actions were the result of a form of "adventure

deprivation" and social alienation.

In addition to concern over radical influences, two other explanations emerged with respect to gangs. The first explanation offered to explain gangs originated from youth workers in the Killarney area. They noted that,

> "There's no doubt the trouble (gangs) exists...More trained staff and organized activities inside would reduce trouble from teenagers outside Killarney community centre...the centre closes at 10:00 p.m. - just at the time teenagers need a place to go".[40]

Thus the lack of recreational facilities thesis re-emerged; this explanation however, was yoked with the expressed need for youth guidance workers. Second, a discussion on the "Dunbar Park Gang" indicated that its members were maturing out of gang activity.[41] Implicitly at least, gang formation and participation were also linked to age and immaturity.

POST WAVE III DEVELOPMENTS: 1973-1985

Although there is overlap between the emergence of Asian gangs and the decline of fascist and park gangs in Vancouver, the same cannot be said for the explanations offered to account for the rise of Asian gangs. According to media reports at the time, the emergence of gang activity during this period can be traced to the long standing tradition of Chinese Tongs and the inherent mistrust of police on the part of the Chinese community in Chinatown.[42] It appeared that the apparent isolation of Chinatown from the broader society led

to the appearance, and the possible entrenchment, of a gang tradition. The problem of Asian gangs emerged when residents of Chinatown decided that they could not continue to be extortion victims. By this time, however, it appeared that it was too late to eliminate the gangs completely.[43]

Although the works of Campbell (1984) and Joe and Robinson (1980) appear several years after the initial identification of Chinatown's social isolation in 1973, their combined analyses explain, at least partially, the emergence of Asian gangs. The community isolation thesis appears in the work of Campbell (1984) where she argues that migrating cultures cling to their traditions while at the same time attempting to assimilate into the new society. The social isolation thesis, however, is incomplete without the addition of Joe and Robinson's (1980) analysis of Vancouver's Chinatown gangs. New immigrants are isolated from the broader society and are thus subject to gang recruitment drives which may go unchecked due to the community's isolation. Joe and Robinson (1980) extrapolate Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) "differential opportunity structure" to the Asian gang context and argue that the problem is exacerbated when youths are unable to satisfy their monetary needs.[44]

Summary

Several of the theories of youth gangs found in the

academic literature can be identified in reports on the topic
in "The Province". Theories emanating from the works of
Thrasher (1936), Shaw and McKay (1943), Rogers (1945), Spergel
(1966), Klein (1971), Joe and Robinson (1980) and Campbell
(1984) can be found in reports on gangs. However, the
chronological continuity of the theories' development is not
always reflected in reports on the topic appearing in "The
Province". As well, the application of all theoretical
formulations is incomplete; several of the theories have not
been identified in the lay explanations.

The popular, or common sense, "explanations" noted thus
far are valuable in that they offer interesting insights into
the way people thought about gangs, why they form and what
factors could bring about their demise. And, although these
explanations provide insight, they are not empirically
substantiated. Issues that appear frequently in both the
above review and current gang literature, such as adolescent
unemployment and urban expansion in the form of population
growth, have not been tested systematically. These two
explanations are therefore tested empirically below.

THE EMERGENCE OF YOUTH GANGS: ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS.

According to Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992), the
independent variables of inward migration and unemployment are
related to the formation of gangs and gang activity. More

specifically, Spergel claims that in urban centres in the

United States "race or ethnicity and social isolation interact

with poverty and community disorganization to account for much

of the gang problem" (1990 p.171). However, he argues that,

> "The single most important antecedent factor to social
> disorganization appears to be substantial population
> movement and change, especially the immigration of low-
> income, minority, or ethnic cultural groups to an area"
> (1990, p.260).

The extrapolation of Spergel's notion of social

disorganization from the United States to Canada may be

erroneous. It is doubtful that Vancouver has the same kinds

of socially disorganized neighbourhoods as the large American

cities referred to by Spergel. Nevertheless, as Lee (1992)

indicates, inward migration and subsequent population changes

do appear to be related to gang formation. It appears that

the problem is not youth gangs per se; rather, gangs are

symptomatic of a larger problem. In Lee's words,

> "...the lack of social capital available to (new
> Canadian) youths to meet their psychosocial needs in
> adaptation to a new culture...The new Canadian adolescent
> is in a double bind with his family of origin due to
> cultural conflicts and differentiation issues. This same
> adolescent may be behind at school, frustrated with
> his progress and lack of achievement. Recreational
> opportunities, counselling and community participation
> may be limited by language, cultural misunderstanding,
> and neglect. Unemployment is high and entry level jobs
> often require skills not yet developed by the adolescent.
> It is in this climate that gangs form" (Lee, 1992 p.19).

As with Spergel (1990), Lee's (1992) assertions are also

problematic. Lee cannot account for youth gang members who

originate from English speaking countries, Canadian born gang
members, or gangs that originate from the middle-class.

Despite the apparent deficiencies inherent in the
analyses by both Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992), they do offer
a starting point from which to develop hypotheses to account
for gangs in Vancouver historically. Both authors theorize
that inward migration resulting in population changes and
unemployment are associated with gang formation. Theoretical
and empirical support for a testing of the inward migration
thesis is well established by both authors, and can be traced
back to the work of Thrasher (1936). However, this type of
support is less evident for the unemployment hypothesis. The
rationale for testing the unemployment hypothesis is based
upon the previous analysis of popular explanations appearing
in the print media. As previously noted, several lay
explanations of youth gangs suggest that unemployment is a
factor in gang formation and activity. These two hypotheses
are thus examined below.

YOUTH GANGS IN VANCOUVER AND IMMIGRATION

In Figure 4-1, inward migration is treated as an
independent variable with respect to the number of youth gang
articles which is used as an indicator of youth gang activity.
The correlation between the two variables is then calculated.

FIGURE 4-1
Youth Gangs and Inward Migration
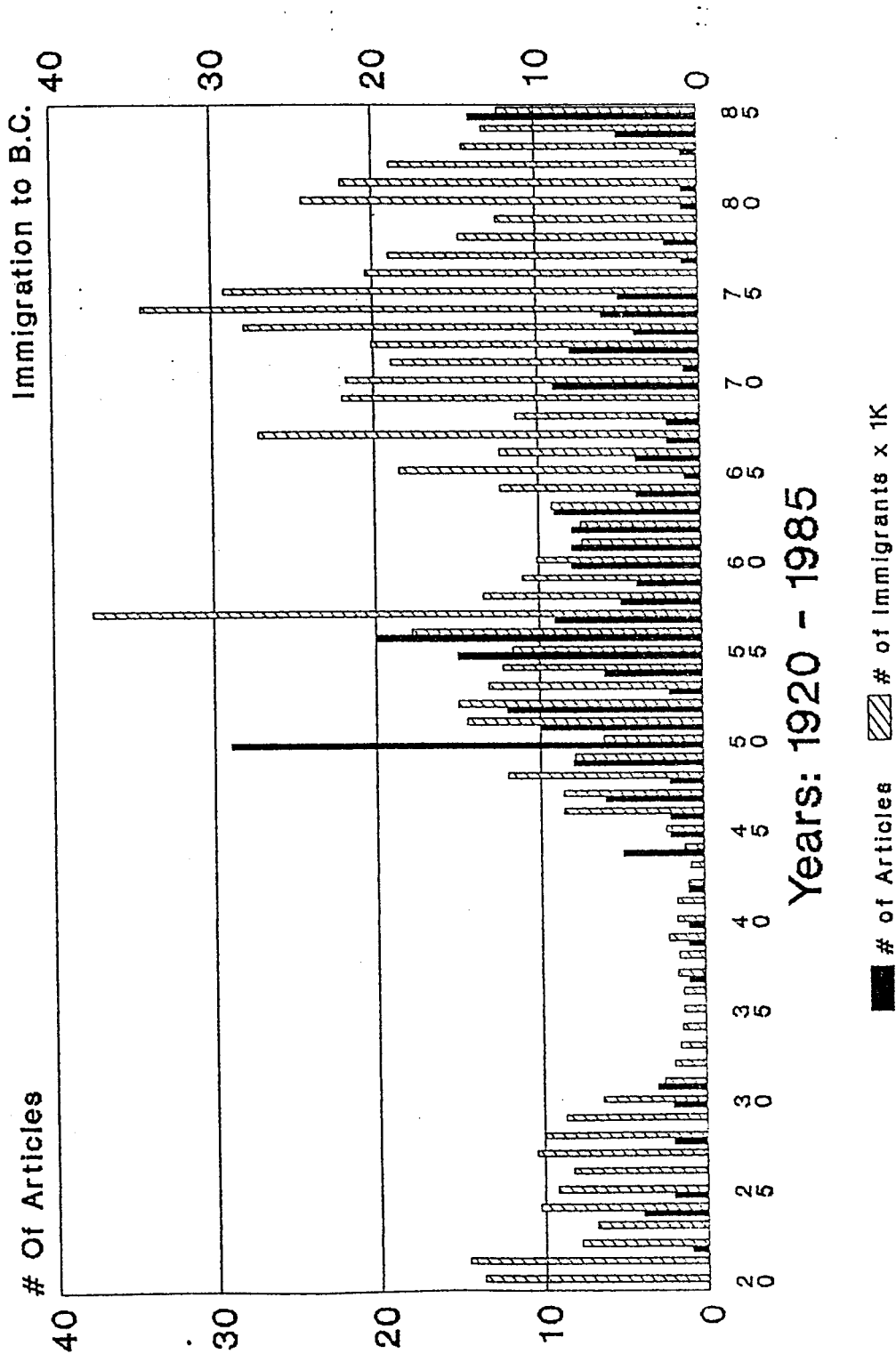
The unit of analysis in this research, "The Province" newspaper, precludes a direct test of the hypothesis that inward migration is related to youth gang formation. Rather, immigration rates are compared to the number of gang related newspaper articles appearing in the paper. As well, the source of immigrants is given as an indicator of the possible origin of gang members. It should be noted that immigrant source data are given for Canada but not provincially (Statistics Canada 89-510). For the present discussion, it is assumed that immigrants would settle in a proportionate manner nationwide, but it is recognized that there are certain areas in Canada, such as the larger urban centres, that may attract more immigrants than others.

The pattern portrayed in Figure 4-1 suggests that there is a relationship between the number of newspaper articles appearing annually in "The Province" and the number of immigrants moving to B.C. according to province of intended destination for the period of 1920 to 1985. The strength of this relationship, however, is difficult to determine.

The hypothesis tested here is stated as:

H_o: The relationship between immigration and the appearance of youth gang articles in the print medium is not significant.

H_1: Increases in immigration are significantly related to increases of reports of youth gangs in the print medium.

An analysis of the association between immigration and the number of youth gang articles in the print medium

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indicates a slight positive association between the two variables ($r = .154$, $p < .05$).

Despite the fact that the results are statistically significant, they must be interpreted cautiously. The slight positive association between the two variables does not necessarily prove causation. It would be premature to conclude that an increase in inward migration leads to an increase in the number of youth gang articles. Therefore, in this case the null hypothesis is not rejected. The weak relationship between the two variables indicates that other unidentified factors may be responsible for the increase in youth gang articles. For example, inward migration may be linked to economic downturns or gang activity may occur at the same time as the immigration, but may be unrelated.

YOUTH GANGS IN VANCOUVER AND UNEMPLOYMENT

For the same reasons noted in the discussion on immigration, it is not possible to directly test the hypothesis that unemployment is associated with youth gang activity. Instead, unemployment rates are compared with reports of youth gang articles appearing in "The Province" which is used as an indicator of youth gang activity. The absence of unemployment data prior to the end of World War II precludes an examination of the relationship between unemployment and the number of youth gang articles for the

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FIGURE 4-2
Youth Gangs and Unemloyment

period of 1920 to 1945. Therefore, data illustrating this association for the period of 1946 to 1985 are presented in Figure 4-2. Compared to the independent variable of immigration, it is less difficult to determine the strength of the relationship between unemployment and the number of articles on youth gangs in the print medium.

The hypothesis tested here is stated as:

H_0: The relationship between unemployment rates and the appearance of youth gang articles in the print medium is not significant.

H_1: Increases in unemployment rates are significantly related to increases in reports of youth gang activity in the print medium.

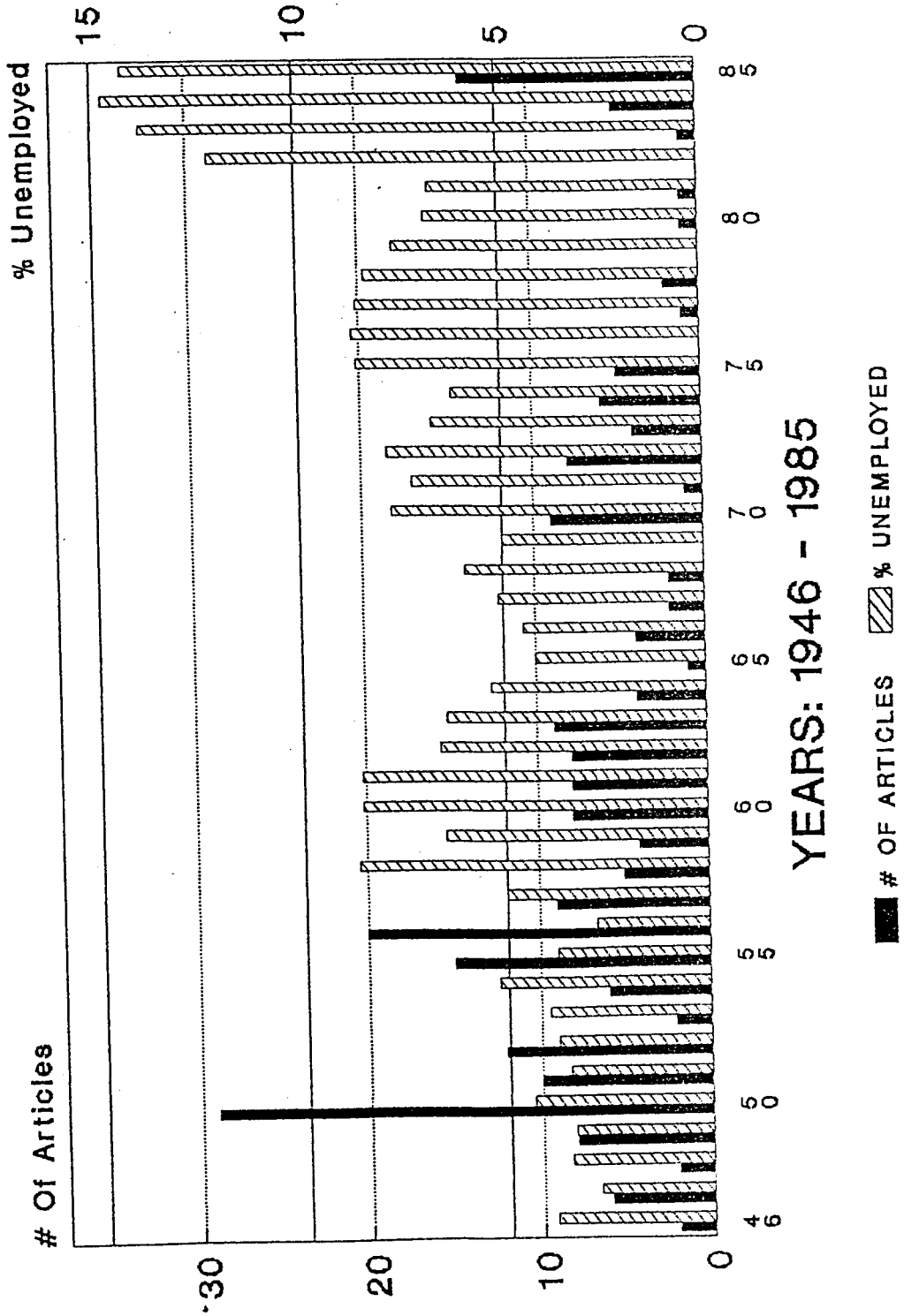An analysis of the association between unemployment rates and the number of youth gang articles indicates an inverse relationship between the two variables ($r = -0.249$, $p < .05$). As with the analysis of the correlation between immigration and the number of youth gang articles, the results of this analysis must be accepted cautiously. The negative association between the two variables, although convincing, does not prove that a increase in unemployment causes a decrease in reports of gangs. In addition, the missing data from 1920 to 1945 cast more doubt on the accuracy of the statistic thus rendering even a tentative acceptance problematic. Therefore, in this case the null hypothesis is not rejected. Other factors need to be considered here as they may also affect the results. For example, the reverse of

the stated hypothesis may be true; youth gang activity may surge in times of economic prosperity.

In conclusion, it appears that the independent variables of immigration and unemployment affect the dependent variable - the number of youth gang articles - in ways that are contrary to the hypotheses as stated. Taken separately, neither immigration nor unemployment can account for increases in youth gang activity as it is reported in "The Province". However, whether or not these variables taken together can account for increased gang activity is another avenue that can be pursued.

The influence of these two combined variables on the number of youth gang articles is achieved through the construction of a multiple regression analysis.

The stated hypothesis for this analysis is:

H_0: The regression equation does not significantly improve the prediction.

H_1: The regression equation significantly improves the prediction.

The data indicate that, with the dependent variable of the number of youth gang articles held as a constant, the regression model explains little of the variance ($R = .103$, $F = 2.133$, df = 2, 37, $p < 0.133$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Summary

It appears that the hypotheses developed from the work of both Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992) cannot account for the number of articles on youth gangs (as an indicator of youth gang activity) in the analyzed print medium. These anomalous results, although contrary to popular theoretical explanations and literature, establish an empirical base from which further research on the topic can proceed. The implications of such inquiry, and the current research, are discussed in the next, and final, chapter.

NOTES

(Articles From "The Province")

1. A chronological account of the theoretical formulations that purport to explain gangs is set out in Appendix A.

2. 08/12/24 28 Solving corner gang problem

3. 12/11/31 34 Declares criminals are ruining youth

4. 11/25/33   4 He likes children though

5. 08/21/42   5 Boys' clubs curb juvenile delinquency

6. 05/12/45   8 Youth program sought to curb hoodlumism

7. 08/01/44 1-2 Tipsy Tar's tall tale started Zoot riot

8. Appier (1990) traces the appearance of zoot suit gangs in Los Angeles to racial tension between Caucasian and Mexican-American groups. For the most part, zoot suit gangs in Los Angeles were comprised of Mexican-Americans.

9. 01/23/47 1-2 Steveston parents, sons to meet to battle against delinquency

10. 02/28/47 1-2 (Mason, Don) New 'fagin' hinted city gang leader

11. 11/15/49 11 Mulligan warns youth gangs

12. 11/24/49 17 New violence sweeps youth

13. 12/01/49 25 Youth recreation survey suggested

14. 04/18/50 1-2 (Moyer, Ed) Rowdyism cut in half

15. 03/15/50 21 Police busy quelling rowdyism

16. 05/31/50 21 Youth gangs need steering

17. 04/12/50 21 City labour seeks curb on gangs

18. For example, compared to males aged 25 and older, males aged 14 - 19 and 20 - 24 experienced almost two times the rate of unemployment for the period of 1946 - 1950 (Leacy, 1983, D223).

19. 04/18/50 1-2 (Moyer, Ed) Rowdyism cut in half

20. To date, attempts to locate a copy of the Weir Committee

Report have been unsuccessful. The report was originally published in 1948 but was marked "strictly confidential" by Dr. G.M. Weir, who was the minister of education at the time. Apparently, the report made suggestions relating to the perceived need for community recreation facilities. It was believed that youth would be less likely to participate in "vandalism, petty crime and gang warfare" if they had access to community centres. See: note 20 for reference.

21. 05/04/50   17   (Green, John) Gangs report bared

22. 06/14/50   14   Expert explains gang problem

23. 08/10/51   1   (Larsen, Bruce) City Zoot-Suiters hit new low

24. 04/20/54   5   'Sign' of the zoot vanishing rapidly say B.C. principals at convention

25. 12/04/51   2   Knifing follows Zoot-Suiter warning

26. Arguably, Deputy Chief Ambrose provided a more accurate assessment of the situation because unemployment appeared to provide gangs with members. As noted previously, unemployment affected post World War II youth more severely than any other identifiable group. As an identifiable example, disenfranchised "zoot suit" gangs would have faced unemployment problems and thus been likely participants in gang activity.

    See also:
    02/12/54 1-2 Young 'Hollywood Hoodlums' jailed

27. 11/22/55   10   Youth leader says juvenile violence a constant problem

28. 11/24/55   21   Lax homes blamed for delinquency

29. 12/07/55   29   PTAs to fight juvenile gangs

30. 04/30/57   1   Whipping of thugs sought

31. 01/10/58   21   Adult penalty urged for young hooligans

32. 11/08/61   17   Street assaults up - Archer concerned

33. 11/07/67   2   Policeman scores rowdyism publicity

34. 07/09/60   2   Thugs beat immigrants
    07/16/70 1,13 (Manning, Pat) Punk gangs take over English Bay

35. Sellin (1938) suggests that "...culture conflict occurs when the rules expressed in the criminal law clash with the demands of group conduct norms" (in: Siegal, 1992 p.204). This type of culture conflict is not to be confused with culture conflict that results when an immigrant group's culture clashes with that of the dominant culture.

36. 07/15/70   2   Youths to curb vandals?
    07/16/70 1,13 (Manning, Pat) Punk gangs take over English Bay

37. 10/07/71   5   Keep this experiment

38. 10/06/72 1-2   (Hrushowy, Pat) 'Big brother' may keep tabs on delinquents

39. 06/13/72   27   (Nicol, Eric) Spunky punks

40. 07/27/74   64   Age breaking up that old gang

41. 11/19/73   27   (Hendrickson, Bob) Teens bored-youth workers

42. 02/17/73 1,27 (Hendrickson, Bob) The Chinatown patrol

43. 02/04/78   4   (Bell, Dennis) Chinatown helps police put lid on youth gangs

    12/02/83   4   (Jiwa, Salim) Police aim to cage Red Eagles

44. Dubro (1992) suggests that Asian youth gangs established themselves virtually unchallenged by established law enforcement agencies due to the reluctance of Chinatown residents to involve "outsiders" in their community's problems. The lack of trust and cooperation displayed by the Chinese community in Chinatown towards the Vancouver police has prompted a prominent member of the "Vancouver Gang Squad" to say that it is doubtful that the gang "problem" will ever be brought under control. This outlook becomes more conceivable when one considers the influence of Triads originating in Hong Kong and San Francisco.

    See also:
    02/04/78   4   (Bell, Dennis) Chinatown helps police put lid on youth gangs
    12/02/83   4   (Jiwa, Salim) Police aim to cage Red Eagles

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS AND

THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH ON GANGS

Given the dearth of research on youth gangs in Canada, this thesis has substantially contributed to the field. As acknowledged in the Methods Appendix, the primary data used in the analysis (i.e., newspaper reports) have been screened through the ideology of news reporters, a process which may not necessarily result in a valid and/or reliable reporting of reality, but can be taken to indicate the pictures constructed by them (Voumvakis and Ericson, 1984). The examination of news articles has revealed previously unknown aspects of gangs in Vancouver. The first of these is the historical presence of gangs in Vancouver. Since the emergence of the first wave of gang activity in 1924, youth gangs and gang activity have ebbed and flowed over time revealing a wave-like pattern.

Second, in addition to being a public nuisance, historically gangs have been engaged in status offenses prescribed in the now repealed Juvenile Delinquents Act and in property offenses such as theft and vandalism. Some have also been responsible for violent crimes such as assault, robbery, possession of weapons, and murder.

Third, up until the appearance of Asian gangs in 1973,

territorial domain was a significant characteristic of gangs and gang activity in Vancouver. For example, "Corner Lounger" gangs were identified by the streets they occupied. Similarly, reports on the disputes between various "hoodlum" gangs frequently referred to the gangs' geographical origins. Many of the inter-gang battles occurred when gangs or some of their members intruded upon "turf" claimed by a rival gang. By the time "park" gangs appeared, the nature of gangs had changed to include city parks, rather than city streets, as territories.

Finally, in addition to increasing our knowledge on gangs, this thesis has provided some insight into the ways that Vancouver society has historically reacted to gangs. Not surprisingly, this response has also been cyclical. Due to the scope of this thesis, an analysis of the phenomenon was not undertaken; rather, it is referenced in conjunction with the analysis of the cycles of gang activity.

In exploring the cyclic nature of youth gangs, two hypotheses derived from the work of Spergel (1990) and Lee (1992) were tested. These hypotheses suggest that inward migration and unemployment are factors that contribute to the appearance of youth gangs. However, the results of these tests led to a tentative falsification of the two hypotheses. Although somewhat anomalous, these results are not surprising

for two reasons. First, although the work of Spergel (1990) has achieved empirical support in the past, there is no indication that it has been applied to the Canadian context. Therefore, the application of his thesis to an historical study of gangs in Vancouver may be erroneous because of social and cultural differences between Canada and the United States. Second, although the work of Lee (1992) may explain why immigrants to Canada join gangs today, it does not explain why gangs have formed and persisted in the past.

The apparent inadequacy of the inward migration and unemployment hypotheses to explain youth gangs in Vancouver should not be negatively construed. Indeed, as Popper (1965) suggests, falsification is an essential component of the theory building process. If a theory is falsified, it may be modified and re-tested or applied to different situations and thus achieve greater explanatory power. Following the identification and delineation of theoretical explanations emerging from the literature and the present research, the implications of these results and their impact on future research on the topic of youth gangs are discussed below.

Theories Emerging From The Research

An intriguing feature of the waves of gang activities is that they appear to follow a pattern. This pattern, however, is not related to any one societal factor; rather, it seems to

be associated with major events occurring in North American society and the presence of gangs in other western countries.

First, the appearance of "Corner Lounger" gangs in the 1920s, and following World War I, resembles the gang activity found in major American cities at the time. For example, Thrasher (1936) identified 1,313 gangs in Chicago during the 1920s; the activities of these gangs seemed to resemble the activities of the corner lounger gangs in Vancouver. Second, the appearance of "Zoot Suit" gangs at the end of World War II is associated with similar gang developments in the United States and other cities in Canada. As well, the appearance of "Hoodlum" gangs in the 1940s and 1950s coincides with the appearance of similar gangs in the United States (Miller, 1958), Great Britain (Cohen, 1972 and Pearson, 1983) and Australia (Braithwaite and Barker, 1978). Following World War II, all four countries appeared to be experiencing youth related "problems" and gang activities. Third, "Park" gangs appeared close to the escalation of American military involvement in the Vietnam War in the mid 1960s. Moreover, the identification of gangs as a social problem reached a peak about the same time as Miller (1976) suggests that gangs reappeared as a major social problem in the United States (the early 1970s).

Finally, "Asian" gangs first appeared near the end of the

Vietnam War in the mid-1970s; however, the surge of activity in 1985 also involved gangs and gang members from other ethnic communities. This surge also coincides with increased gang activity and a rekindled interest in gangs in the United States, although the strength and type of the relationship between gang activity in Vancouver and the United States have yet to be determined.

The issue of parallel gang development leads to an important question: what factors may account for the historical similarity of gang activity between countries, and are these related to the wave-like nature of gang activity in Vancouver? While the first part of this question is beyond the scope of this thesis, the latter will be addressed here.

From a conflict perspective, it could be argued that the formation of gangs and gang activity is the result of lower-class youth oppression. Pearson (1983) notes that, historically, youth gangs in Great Britain have been subjected to repression by the upper-class whenever the gangs have threatened the existing socio-economic structure. A similar argument could be applied to the ebb and flow of gang activity in Vancouver. As illustrated in Chapter IV, the identified youth gangs comprised members who were marginal to the broader society. In the first wave, "The Province" often portrayed "Corner Lounger" gangs as unemployed and vagrant youth who

engaged in gang activity for money. Reports on gangs in the
second wave indicate that zoot suit gangs engaged in gang
activity because they were morally inferior. In the third
wave of activity, park gangs were portrayed as drug addicts
and social degenerates who engaged in gang activity for fun
and adventure. Finally, the isolation of Chinatown's gangs
from the broader society suggests that Asian gangs may
experience multiple marginality. They may be marginal to both
the broader society and to the Chinese community.

An issue related to lower-class oppression is the role of
the media in the creation and perpetuation of perceived
deviance including youth gang activity. The present surge of
gang activity in Vancouver can be used to discuss this claim;
it has been described as the latest in a series of waves.
Although the media have focused on the Asian component during
this period, research indicates that individuals from other
ethnic backgrounds are involved in gangs (Gordon and Young,
1993; Girrard, 1992). Moreover, Asian gang activity in the
mid 1970s can be considered a precursor to the surge of gang
activity that started in 1985.

The application of the theses developed by Klein and
Myerhoff (1967), Cohen (1972), Braithwaite and Barker (1978)
and Muelbaur and Dodder (1983) to this surge seems
appropriate. The mass media may be responsible for delivering

an inaccurate or incomplete picture of gangs to the public.
In this particular instance, it seems to result in the
creation of the myth that Asian gangs are the only kinds of
gangs in the city and that they are solely responsible for
gang activity. The media have created a climate of fear
which, ironically, results in more media attention being paid
to gangs. In turn, the youth involved may adopt the label
that the media have attached to them; others, intrigued by the
prospects of gang life, are attracted to gangs. In this
instance, the media may be at least partly responsible for
creating and perpetuating a gang tradition.

At present, it is not clear why the Asian gangs component
have been singled out as the principal force in the most
recent surge of gang activity. A possible explanation lies in
an examination of the role of the media as an instrument of
class interests. Cohen (1972) argues that deviant groups are
often transformed into "folk-devils" to deflect the public's
attention away from the real problems in society when these
problems threaten the existing socio-economic order. Asian
gangs may be performing the role of folk-devils to deflect
public attention away from such issues as unemployment and
other social and economic ills. In addition, the class
interests hypothesis may also explain previous gang activity
in Vancouver. This assumption seems tenable given the data
presented in this thesis and the identification of parallel

gang development in other countries. Most gangs and gang members originate from the lower-class and are marginal to the broader society. At the present time, however, the historical relationship between gangs and the interests of the elite class is undefined. Further research in this area is required.

Implications For Further Research

The first implication of the research relates to the impact of phenomenological and theoretical influences from the United States. It should come as no surprise that theories emanating from that country have not acquired empirical support when applied to the history of youth gangs in Vancouver. Goldstein and Huff (1993) note that American gangs concentrate in urban ghettos, areas that experience extensive social disorganization and high rates of poverty, and thus provide fertile ground for gang development and gang-related crimes.[1] Given the social, cultural and demographic differences between Vancouver and American cities, future research on the topic of gangs in Vancouver, and perhaps the general Canadian context, may need to go beyond mere extrapolation of theory from the United States to Canada.

The second implication of the research relates to the media's role in the creation and amplification of youth gangs and the perpetuation of gang activity through the creation of

moral panics (see, e.g. Cohen, 1972). Research in this vein could involve an analysis of the media's role in the portrayal of gang activities and the adoption of the gang label by identified gangs and their members. The topic could be approached on two fronts: (i) an in-depth analysis of the economic, political, legal and social climate at the time of the identified waves of gang activity; and (ii) interviews with reporters, journalists, columnists and editors to determine what factors, if any, contribute to the creation and perpetuation of gangs and gang activities by the media. Data from these two sources could be analyzed along with the data accumulated in this thesis. In effect, this thesis is a potential springboard for such research because it identifies the surges in gang activity.

The reformulation of Lee's (1992) thesis is another possible avenue for future research on gangs in Vancouver and other Canadian cities. He suggests that immigrant families have difficulty when they arrive in Canada because they do not speak English. They often accept low paying jobs and dual-parent income is required to maintain an adequate lifestyle; the result is social and economic isolation. This isolation contributes to inadequate child supervision which may provide the fodder for gang recruitment drives.

Lee's (1992) claim is applicable to the present gang

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situation but not to the history of the appearance and disappearance of gangs in Vancouver. However, his thesis could be applied to an historical analysis of gangs in Vancouver, and other Canadian urban centres, if the analysis were to consist of research measuring the correlation between gang activity and social aspects of immigrant families. Variables to consider are the ability of family members to speak English upon their arrival to Canada, the socio-economic position of the family, and whether or not both parents work outside of the home.

Another research implication relates to the history of society's responses to youth gangs. Several recurring themes appear and disappear along with surges in gang activity. The most notable of these themes is repressive law enforcement policies aimed at eliminating gangs and gang-related behaviour. These appear to be recycled whenever there is a public outcry about gangs and gang activities.

Through the delineation of past failures and successes, an historical analysis of the various policies and responses executed by the Vancouver Police and other related authorities may prove to be invaluable in the formulation of present day policies and practices to deal with gangs in Vancouver. This type of research could be used to cross validate the gang-related information obtained from "The Province" appearing in

this thesis. Potential data sources include the Vancouver Police Museum, the Vancouver City Archives, the Provincial Archives, and the Vancouver School Board. As well, probation records and reports from curfew officers may contribute to a study of this nature.

In addition, the information on Vancouver gangs in this thesis could be enhanced through the analysis of official documents. A study of this type could establish the validity of the assumption about the number of articles reflecting the reality of youth gang activity in the city. An analysis of police, municipal government, and school records could contribute substantially to the print media analysis in this thesis, and to the general body of knowledge on gangs. This information could provide more details on the various attributes of gangs including their activities and the factors which may have led to both their appearance and their demise.

The final avenue of future research on gangs in Vancouver relates to the identification of previous and present gang members, and the recording and analysis of their accounts of gang life. Research in this vein has a significant history in criminology. For example, "The Jack Roller" by Shaw (1930) and "The Professional Thief" by Sutherland (1939) are two famous ethnographies from the "Chicago School". Ethnographic research on gangs could focus on a variety of subjects: the

individual's perception of why he or she joined the gang, the activities of the gang, whether gang members identified themselves in any distinctive way (e.g. their style of dress, location or territory of operations, and vocabulary), and what factors, if any, led to the breakup of the gang.

Although it may be difficult to locate gang members from the first wave of gang activity, surviving members from the second wave onwards may be available for interviews. To locate these individuals, advertisements seeking participants for the research could be published in daily editions of "The Province", "The Sun" and in community newspapers. It may be possible to create a snowball sample from the individuals who respond to the advertisement.

These research possibilities are only a few of the many options for research on gangs in Vancouver and Canada. Any research on youth gangs would be welcome considering the vastness of the topic and the fact that it has been virtually ignored by scholars and other researchers in Canada.

NOTES

1. Goldstein and Huff suggest that "... social disorganization...may or may not be related to racism, culture conflict (e.g., differences between an immigrant group's culture and that of the dominant community group), social isolation (e.g., environmental separation of a housing project from the neighbourhood or the neighbourhood from the city), or poverty" (1993 p.385).

APPENDIX A

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUTH GANG THEORY

Author(s)	Summary
Thrasher (1936)	Inward migration of newcomer populations to urban environments causes rapid social change. Some people are unable to adapt to changing social and economic conditions. These slum areas spawn gang development and participation.
Shaw (1943) & McKay	Social disorganization in the community leads to breakdown in normative controls resulting in gangs.
Whyte (1943)	Habitual association with gang members leads to gang involvement. This process is enhanced by the inability of the community to assimilate into the broader fabric of society.
Rogers (1945)	A variety of structural and individual characteristics lead to gang development such as: poverty, poor housing, family discord and poor parenting, the existence of a gang neighbourhood tradition, a lack of interests, hobbies and recreational facilities, poor role models by the church and school as socializers, abnormal personalities and the role of western culture in the generation of deviance through competition.
Cohen, A. (1955)	Lower-class status and conformity norms differ from those of the middle-class.

Yet, lower-class youth are measured against middle-class standards, especially in school. Gangs provide status and conformity goals which are attainable by these youth.

Miller (1958)

The lower-class milieu generates delinquency amongst "street corner groups" by providing its own measure of status which is distinct from that of the broader society. Female centred homes may create status and belonging needs. These needs are satisfied in the gang.

Bloch (1958)
&
Niederhoffer

Lack of "Rites de Passage" in North American culture creates an identity crisis amongst young males. Youths join gangs in an effort to satisfy the need to achieve adult status.

Cloward (1960)
&
Ohlin

Differential opportunity structure. Lower class youth strive to reach middle-class goals but legitimate avenues of access to these goals are limited. Illegal opportunities to reach these goals are provided by gangs and make gangs attractive.

Yablonsky (1962)

Rapidly changing, disorganized slum areas contain several negative sociocultural problems resulting in defective socialization of youth. Sociopathic personalities may result from this environment. Sociopathic youth are attracted to gangs because they serve as desirable pseudo communities in a situation where alienation, despair and lack of opportunity in ghetto life are the norm.

Spergel (1966)
&
Klein (1971)

Delinquent subcultures (gangs) are a result of three related factors: the lower-class culture which experiences problems such

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as chronic unemployment, broken families poor housing, poor education, serious physical and mental illness and some form of minority group status; the youth culture which experiences the discontinuity of North American culture and the resulting lack of adequate role models; and, the neighbourhood opportunity system which fails to provide opportunities or sufficient access to the status symbols of the broader society.

Klein (1967)
&
Myerhoff
Cohen, S. (1972)
Braithwaite
&
Barker (1978)
Muelbaur
&
Dodder (1983)

The role of the media in processing information and delivering it to the public invariably leads to errors in editing and the magnification of social problems. The public receives a distorted image of gangs which leads to an exaggerated fear of the phenomenon. The fear creates more media attention to gangs and gang members adopt the label they are given. Other youths learn about gangs through media reports and are attracted to the behaviour. The emergence of a gang trend is the result.

Miller (1976)

Definitions of gang behaviour change over time giving the impression that gangs appear and disappear, but gangs are a permanent feature of North American society.

Moore (1978)

The traditional suppression of minority cultures has evolved to a point where oppression is now embedded within the structure of society. Oppression leads to inequality and the lack of legitimate means to achieve goals promoted by the broader society. Gang activity is a means used to achieve those goals.

Joe (1980) & Robinson	Problems of cultural assimilation on the part of newly arrived immigrant youth lead to gang formation. Gangs provide opportunities to fulfil monetary and masculine image needs.
Pearson (1983)	The upper-class seeks to maintain its dominant position in society. This is achieved through the oppression of the lower-class. Gangs form as a reaction to this oppression.
Campbell (1984)	Gangs wax and wane over time and can be traced to the problems immigrant cultures face while attempting to merge into American Culture. Each new culture clings to its traditional identity while at the same time trying to achieve the American dream. This conflict makes gangs a perpetual feature of American society.
Vigil (1988)	Poverty and low socio-economic status/multiple marginality lead to gang formation. Gang members are marginal to the broader society, their community and their families.

APPENDIX B

METHOD

The rationale for researching the history of youth gangs in Vancouver is threefold. First, since the early 1980s, youth gangs have emerged as a significant social problem absorbing a considerable amount of public, media and law enforcement attention (Girrard, 1992). Placing the problem within a socio-historical context enables an identification of the patterns and trends of youth gang development and activity. Second, the identification of the factors that contribute to youth gang formation, and the concomitant activities of gangs, may prove useful in present day efforts to deal with the problem. An historical analysis of societal responses to youth gangs may enable society to determine which approaches, if any, are effective in quelling gangs. Finally, although youth gangs are presently topical, up to this point Canadian academic interest in the subject has been minimal.

Social scientists suggest that in order to carry out social research the researcher must first articulate a research question and then develop a research design (Babbie, 1986; Palys, 1992). Three separate but related questions were identified to guide this thesis. First, does Vancouver have a history of youth gangs? Second, if the answer is yes, what is the nature and scope of the phenomenon? Third, what

explanations can account for why youth gangs form, and persist over time.

The city of Vancouver was selected for the research for two primary reasons. First, according to Miller (1990) youth gangs are primarily an urban phenomenon; Vancouver is the largest proximate urban area available to the researcher and would presumably have experienced more gang activity than other urban centres in British Columbia during the analyzed time period. Second, although there is some evidence to indicate that gangs have been active in other Lower Mainland communities, an analysis of gangs and gang activities in these other municipalities would have made the research project unwieldy. Moreover, it was unclear whether information on youth gangs in these other municipalities was available, let alone accurate.

The method used to address the research questions involved an analysis of "The Province" newspaper for the period between 1900 and 1985. At the outset, it was unclear whether gangs and gang activities had waxed and waned over time or remained a constant phenomenon. "The Province" was selected as the print media source because it was the only daily newspaper being published in Vancouver at the beginning of the 20th century. .Its main, and most long standing competitor, "The Sun" did not start publication until 1924.

As well, prior to 1982 "The Province" was published in "broadsheet" serials format whereas "The Sun" published in the "tabloid" format until the 1970s. "Tabloid" newspapers are considered to contain more sensationalistic news articles than the "broadsheet" variety of newspaper and are therefore given less credibility as an accurate information source (Lynch, 1983).

The research proceeded on the assumption that historical patterns of media interest in youth gangs accurately reflected the phenomenon. It is recognized, however, that this is an operational understanding for the purposes of the present thesis research and not necessarily one that has empirical reality. As noted by Voumvakis and Ericson, "...news reporters are involved in ideological work...(1984 p.42)" which can determine what is constructed as reality for the purposes of publication.

Due to the absence of a comprehensive and accurate newspaper index on the topic of youth gangs, the method for extracting information about gangs from "The Province" involved a content analysis of each daily edition. This analysis was accomplished by reading each publication for the period between 1900 and 1985. The term "youth gang" was operationalized according to Klein's (1971) definition of youth gangs.

"...any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who (a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in the neighbourhood, (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name), and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighbourhood residents and/or law enforcement agencies (Klein, 1971 p.13)."

A total of 261 articles were identified according to this definition and then catalogued chronologically. Included in this list are articles that inappropriately or arbitrarily identify "youth group" activity as gang activity. Articles of this nature were included if they satisfied the criteria set out by Spergel (1990). He defines "youth group" behaviour as,

"...law violating behaviour committed by juveniles in relatively small groups that tend to be ephemeral, i.e., loosely organized with shifting leadership. The delinquent group is engaged in various forms of minor or serious crime (1990 p.181)."

A list of these articles appears in Appendix C. Figure B-1 below illustrates the yearly totals of gang related newspaper articles appearing in "The Province" for the period between 1900 and 1985.

There are three main concerns regarding the unit of analysis. These concerns affect the internal validity of the research, a point that will be covered later in this discussion. First, it is important to note that the information provided in "The Province" is sometimes lacking in details. For example, in many reported gang related incidents

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gangs are not identified by name; rather, they are identified by location. This situation may denote their "youth group" rather than "youth gang" status or may indicate that information on the gangs is being suppressed for some unknown reason.

The second concern regarding "The Province" as an information source relates to its current status as a tabloid. For the most part, the issue of sensationalist journalism should not affect the present research. "The Province" was published in broadsheet form until 1982; thus only three years of publication would be affected in the event there was a substantial difference in reporting styles between the two formats. More importantly, however, at one time "The Province" enjoyed a high standard of journalism. As noted by Lynch (1983) "The Province" has a better reputation for journalistic integrity historically than its main competitor, "The Sun".

The final concern to be noted relates to the reliability of the information source. As indicated above, it is assumed that historical patterns of media interest in youth gangs accurately reflected the phenomenon. This assumption demands attention given the issue of sensationalistic journalism noted above. Three issues relating to the media's portrayal of gangs make it unlikely that substandard journalism negatively

affects the reliability and validity of the present research.
First, media reports of the present gang situation in
Vancouver do not appear to be overly exaggerated except in one
tabloid, "The Province" (Girrard, 1992). Recently, an inter-
ministerial committee was formed to investigate the problems
posed by gangs in British Columbia and a gang "hotline" was
established for youth confronted with gang problems. These
developments indicate that gangs presently constitute a social
problem of considerable magnitude. Second, media coverage of
gangs in Vancouver extends beyond the print medium and
includes still photographs and film coverage of gangs[1].
Finally, due to the print media's practice of over-reporting
crime news, it can be assumed that the information presented
is comprehensive although it is recognized that it may not
necessarily be complete[2].

As indicated in the discussion above, the data obtained
from "The Province" could threaten the internal validity of
the research. Every effort has been made to minimize these
problems by including as much information as possible in the
analyses of gangs and the explanations offered to account for
them.

As the data in Figure B-1 indicate, media attention to
youth gangs has appeared and disappeared during the analyzed
time period. Indeed, the analysis reveals a wave-like

Youth Gang Articles: 1900 – 1985

NUMBER OF ARTICLES

YEAR

Series 1
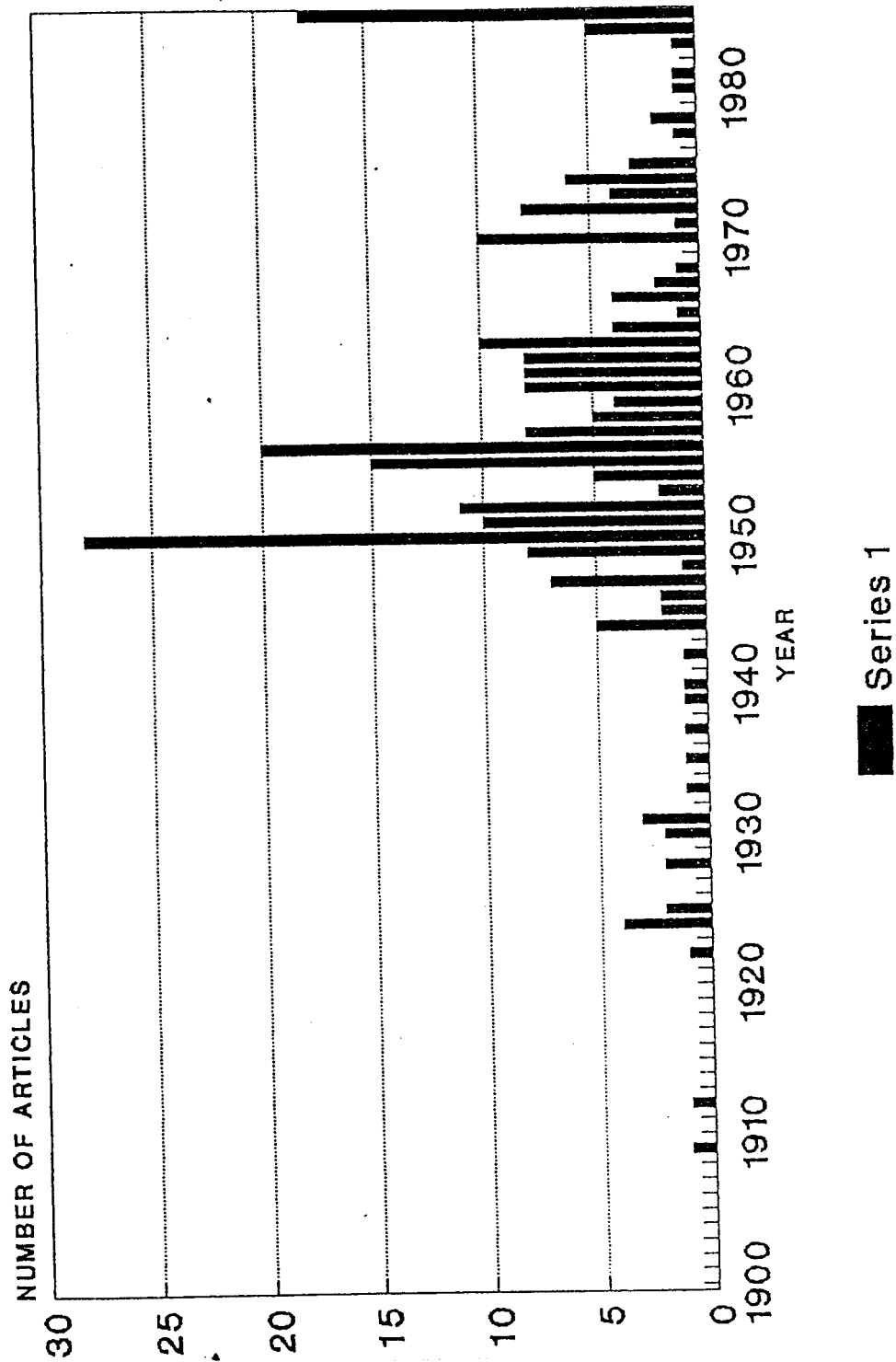
frequency of activity and reporting. It was not possible to analyze all of the gang reported articles identified. However, several peaks mark periods of substantial gang activity and serve as focal points for the analysis.

The focus of the historical analysis was on identifiable gangs in Vancouver and their activities for the period of 1900 to 1985. The year 1900 was selected as a starting point because the city was in the process of developing into an urban centre. Although the population of the city at the beginning of the 20th century was relatively small (28,530 by 1901) it appears that much of the population consisted of new immigrants living in newly developed neighbourhoods and communities (Census of Canada, 1921). The research stops at 1985, a time when youth gang activity surged in Vancouver.

Another aspect of the research involved the identification of the factors that led to the emergence of youth gangs. A qualitative description of the various explanations for the emergence and activities of youth gangs in Vancouver for the time period analyzed appears in the first part of Chapter IV. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to testing two hypotheses derived from the work of Spergel (1990) and Lee, (1992) for the period between 1920 and 1985. The first of these hypotheses suggests that an increase in immigrant populations to an urban area will lead to an

increase in youth gang formation and activity while the second
suggests that unemployment in urban areas also contributes to
the phenomenon. This approach was deemed reasonable
considering the relatively small population of Vancouver at
the beginning of the 20th century (28,530) which increased
almost four times by 1921 to 107,016 as a result of post World
War I immigration to the city (Census of Canada, 1921).

The influence of both immigration to urban centres and
unemployment on the emergence and activities of youth gangs
are tested empirically. A statistical analysis of these two
independent variables and youth gang activity was conducted
with the use of MYSTAT, a student version of SYSTAT.
Immigration and unemployment data for the analysis were
obtained from Statistics Canada (Leacy, 1983). However, the
periods analyzed here differ from the actual time period of
1900 to 1985, due to (a) the absence of significant gang
activity prior to the 1920s and (b) the absence of
unemployment data prior to 1946. A Pearson's correlation was
used to determine whether or not there was any statistically
significant association between immigration rates and the
appearance of youth gang articles in "The Province" for the
period between 1920 and 1985. A Pearson's correlation was
also used to determine if a relationship between unemployment
and the appearance of youth gang articles could be established
for the period between 1946 and 1985. Although this limits

the application of the unemployment hypothesis, it provides a preliminary analysis of the relationship between unemployment rates and youth gang activity.

Finally, a multiple regression analysis was conducted in an effort to determine whether or not the two variables, immigration and unemployment, could predict youth gang activity (i.e. reported incidents appearing in "The Province"). However, due to the constraints imposed by the unemployment rate data, this analysis was limited to the period between 1946 to 1985.

NOTES

1. The Justice Institute of British Columbia has a selection of video tapes on Vancouver Gangs.

2. Katz (1987) conducted research on crime articles appearing in the "New York Times" and "Newsday". He appeared to accept media interpretation of crime related articles without question and argued that media attention to crime news is over-represented compared to other news items.

ARTICLES FROM THE PROVINCE

11/23/09	1	Thieving boys do big business in crime
09/21/12	1	White boys raid Chinatown youth
12/26/22	7	Five youths under arrest on charges of housebreaking
05/01/24	7	Youths accused of being corner loungers remanded to tuesday
07/19/24	28	Suspect boy bandit gang
08/12/24	28	Solving corner gang problem
10/16/24	26	Young hoodlums set fire to south Vancouver block
08/21/25	1	'Auto truck gang' caught by police after hot chase
08/29/25	22	Police arrest nine youths
04/30/28	3	Gang of boys under arrest
10/08/28	3	Nine boys held on theft charges
01/06/30	26	Girl is charged as bandit gang member
04/20/30	1	Arrest juvenile after mile chase
01/31/31	1	Boy bandits are arrested
06/22/31	4	Girl in gang of gasoline bandits
12/11/31	34	Declares criminals are ruining youth
12/18/37	1	Young auto thief sentenced to year
07/19/39	2	Youthful burglar trio pleads guilty
01/04/40	14	Vandalism due to hoodlums
08/21/42	5	Boys' clubs curb juvenile delinquency
07/31/44	1	Police quell "Zoot" battle
08/01/44	1-2	Tipsy Tar's tall tale started Zoot riot
08/30/44	2	Gang threats fail to frighten young witness
10/10/44	7	Zoot-Suiters, sailors mix in street brawl
05/12/45	8	Youth program sought to curb hoodlumism
06/23/45	3	Tire thieves on rampage
05/07/46	19	Five boys held for army thefts
10/21/46	1-2	Police drive on juveniles
01/23/47	1-2	Steveston parents, sons to meet to battle against delinquency
02/28/47	1-2	(Mason, Don) New 'fagin' hinted city gang leader
02/28/47	2	Gang sought as factor in shooting
06/09/47	1-2	10 held in gang 'war' here
06/10/47	1-2	Youths warned fined $10
10/01/47	1	Gangster films, crime novels blamed by killer for downfall
30/06/48	17	(Wedman, Les) Teen-aged gang members bring biggest police problem
08/26/48	1	Police to halt hoodlums
03/22/49	1-3	(Steplee, Jack) Kind hand is Joe's
03/24/49	17	He 'handled' the boys and they quit
11/15/49	11	Mulligan warns youth gangs
11/22/49	1	Hoodlumism committee to be formed
11/23/49	1-2	Knifers stir parents' ire
11/24/49	17	New violence sweeps youth

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12/01/49   25   Youth recreation survey suggested
12/08/49    2   'Humdinger' of rally to discuss hoodlums
01/27/50    1   These hoodlums boast of criminal careers
01/30/50    2   Boy tells of extortion
02/08/50    1   Juveniles convicted of assault
02/13/50   13   Two youths go to jail for assault
03/11/50  1-2   Boy gangs brawling on streets
03/13/50  1-2   Police provide guidance for youth
03/15/50   21   Police busy quelling rowdyism
03/17/50   21   Stiff treatment set for gangs
03/18/50    1   Six held as youths kick up
03/22/50    1   Attempted arson laid to gangs
03/24/50   17   Hoodlums spoil school dances
03/25/50   11   (Stoll, George) Churchmen beat gang problem
03/27/50    1   Hoodlums outwitted by police
04/01/50    2   Rowdies plead guilty in court
04/03/50    3   Zoot suit bandits in hold up
04/04/50    7   Third youth convicted after fracas
04/10/50   13   Police busy checking rowdyism
04/12/50   21   City labour seeks curb on gangs
04/18/50  1-2   (Moyer, Ed) Rowdyism cut in half
04/25/50    3   Zoot suit bandits in holdup
04/28/50   21   Armed hoodlums panic when defied by couple
05/04/50   17   (Green, John) Gangs report bared
05/31/50   21   Youth gangs need steering
06/14/50   14   Expert explains gang problem
06/19/50    8   Man attacked by gang
07/03/50  1-2   Armed gangs plague city
07/27/50    2   Hoodlums break up picnic
08/21/50    1   Hoodlums suspected in drowning
10/07/50   19   Halloween a fiesta-'or else' says mayor
10/28/50   21   Hoodlums warned by police
01/03/51    3   (Hazlitt, Tom) Juvenile crime still a problem
                but youngsters 'pretty sound'
02/14/51  1-2   'Dog-haired' Zoot-Suiter trio debate death of
                truck driver
03/03/51    2   Teen-agers believed firebugs
04/25/51   23   Zoot-Suiter robs woman
07/09/51   13   Violence outbreak marks city weekend
07/12/51   17   Police seek Zoot-Suiters
08/06/51  1-2   7 hurt, 2 held in Zoot attack
08/10/51    1   (Larsen, Bruce) City Zoot-Suiters hit new low
12/04/51    2   Knifing follows Zoot-Suiter warning
12/28/51  1-2   Teenage hoodlums nabbed by police
01/07/52   13   Eight youths charged with 18 house robberies
02/06/52   21   Misdeeds of juveniles keep city police busy
02/11/52    2   Vicious hoodlums rob, wreck house
02/18/52    5   Hoodlum violence flares again
02/18/52    6   Action urged against 'Zooters'
02/18/52    6   Teen-aged hoodlums wreck logging trucks
03/24/52    6   Young hoodlumism continues
03/28/52    8   Young vandal jailed
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04/06/52	24	Rowdies go to Oakalla
06/05/52	21	Police check new theft ring
08/21/52	2	Youths fined; 1 jailed for assault on street
09/20/52	21	Juvenile gang big spenders
01/21/53	8	Young thugs make attack on Baby sitter
10/13/53	8	Gang of 30 boys attack lone boy, 14
01/22/54	15	Knife toting city youths are 'scarce'
02/08/54	17	Youthful trio admits wave of robberies
02/12/54	1-2	Young 'Hollywood Hoodlums' jailed
04/29/54	5	'Sign of the Zoot' vanishing rapidly say B.C. principals at convention
08/26/54	1,4	Arrest man at wife's bedside
09/27/54	8	Gang of youths robs, beats man
01/05/55	23	Arrest of teenagers may end burglaries
04/05/55	21	Aftermath of Zoot-Suit riot closed
05/02/55	21	Gang fight sends youth to hospital
08/16/55	1	Police stop 'gang warfare' before it starts
10/17/55	19	Gang brawl injures policeman
11/21/55	21	Police battle wave of juvenile violence
11/22/55	10	Youth leader says juvenile violence a constant problem
11/24/55	21	Lax homes blamed for delinquency
11/26/55	5	Burnaby police warn 'rowdy' youth gangs
12/06/55	1-2	Violence under control
12/07/55	29	PTAs to fight juvenile gangs
12/09/55	4	B.C. park development urged to curb juvenile delinquency
12/10/55	1	Young hoodlums riot in streets
12/14/55	33	Publicize juvenile crime, Scott urges
12/28/55	21	Hoodlums beat up billiard hall man
01/09/56	17	Police crack down on juvenile crime
01/14/56	1-2	Hoodlums out of city
01/16/56	2	Hoodlumism 'easier to prevent than curb'
01/23/56	2	Juvenile crime off; 2 charged
01/24/56	19	'Hot spot' loiterers give police headache
02/07/56	17	Teen-age crack down continues
02/09/56	21	(de Wolf, John) Youth best remedy for youth problems
04/23/56	1	Motorist beaten up by drinking youths
04/24/56	21	Police to crack down on young hoodlums
04/30/56	17	Police nab 5 teeners, hunt gangs
05/22/56	27	Youths force driver to flee
06/16/56	1	Hoodlums attack graduation party
08/04/56	1-2	Gang cleanup urged
08/06/56	17	'Get tough' policy set for city's hoodlums
08/13/56	2	Police curb hoodlums
08/20/56	1	Hoodlums beat two motorists
09/18/56	1-2	Police drive on hoodlums
09/19/56	29	Experts oppose sending juveniles to police court
09/24/56	19	'Gang' hauls 2 from car
12/21/56	29	Youth burglary gang smashed

01/12/57	23	Four attacked on street; youths injured in brawls
03/25/57	21	Young thugs smash party
04/13/57	23	Boy aids gang in burglary raids
04/30/57	1	Whipping of thugs sought
05/31/57	3	Revolt in our streets
06/07/57	1	Fifty charges facing V teen gang
06/21/57	1	Police quell hoodlums; three held
11/21/57	19	Vicious gang mauls woman over knifing
12/30/57	17	Youth gang beats, robs ill caretaker
01/10/58	21	Adult penalty urged for young hooligans
05/06/58	17	Youths, drug addict accused in burglaries
10/14/58	21	Boy stabbed, teen battle investigated
11/24/58	3	Teen gang blamed for havoc
12/15/58	25	Gangs attack three in city
01/23/59	2	Juvenile 'gangsters' arrested
06/22/59	21	Youth gang raids aviarist $70 birds
09/26/59	1	Gang fight averted here
10/19/59	1	Juvenile gang, girl friends arrested after boarder raid
03/30/60	2	Gang kicks, punches boy
05/20/60	1	Storm waves still wash around Sun's beach sex story
06/11/60	17	(Strickland, Jack) 'Lay off youth-they're not so bad!'
07/09/60	2	Thugs beat immigrants
07/14/60	17	(Nicol, Eric) Primacy of the group
08/29/60	2	Boys beaten by hoodlums
09/21/60	2	High gang 'terrifying' youngsters
11/28/60	1-2	(Hazlitt, Tom) Hoodlums on field stop game
03/27/61	2	Gang members to face 107 charges in thefts
08/11/61	17	Street assaults up-Archer concerned
08/12/61	2	Police concern mounts as attack wave grows
08/14/61	1-2	(Holme, John) Hoodlumism hits a vicious peak-police helpless
08/16/61	3	'Support police crackdown'
08/17/61	3	Hoodlums will be jailed, city magistrate warns
09/15/61	3	Street robberies rising
12/01/61	19	(Bennett Wilf) Canine cops: effective remedy for gang fights, hoodlumism
01/09/62	1	Gang fighters facing jail term, heavy fines
01/12/62	3	Juvenile crime decreases
03/08/62	3	Youth silent about other pals
06/25/62	3	Police arrest 9 teenagers after wave of hoodlumism in city
07/09/62	1	Policewomen saved from teen-age mob
11/10/62	3	Girl gang amasses $3,500
11/10/62	3	Police arrest three youths after attacks
12/10/62	3	Seven attacked by hoodlums
02/25/63	3	4 policemen hurt in gang attacks by hoodlums
02/27/63	3	Free bridges start worries over hoodlums
04/22/63	3	House in shambles after youths call

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07/10/63    3  Police act to curb park rowdyism
07/11/63   17  City parents may police playgrounds
07/30/63   15  Hoodlums beat, kick two men
10/07/63   27  50 youths in melee at party
11/12/63  1-2  Arson gang sought after school blaze
11/13/63  1-2  Arsonists set fires in two more schools
04/27/64    8  Police arrest two after gang attacks brothers
07/06/64    2  Gang of boys smashes 60 windows in school
12/01/64    2  Gang leader's brief career ends in jail
06/15/65    2  Hoodlum problem in parks
05/18/66    2  Five 'Huns' remanded in attack on two girls
06/10/66    8  'Huns' under suspicion in attack on girl, 15
07/18/66   19  Razor attack by 5 boys
10/19/66   25  Young thief sentenced
11/07/67    2  Policeman scores rowdyism publicity
11/24/67   29  Police probe report youth shot by gang
05/27/68   27  18 months for raid on party
10/22/68   27  Youths crash cars
07/13/70  1-2  Rocks and bottles fly as youths pelt police
07/15/70  1-2  (Bridge, Maurice) City warns youngsters to cool
                  it
07/15/70    2  Youths to curb vandals?
07/16/70 1,13  (Manning, Pat) Punk gangs take over English Bay
07/16/70    1  (Smith, Nathan) Police to beef up patrols
07/16/70   13  $100 fine in near riot
07/17/70    1  English Bay tranquil again
07/18/70   23  Judge won't tolerate punks
08/01/70  1-2  (Cronshaw, Keith) Mob 'savages' must be tamed-
                  judge
10/07/71    5  Keep this experiment
06/13/72   27  (Nicol, Eric) Spunky punks
07/22/72  5-6  (Spears, James) Gangs 'glue' and Mao
07/22/72    6  East enders are hard core
08/03/72   25  Liaison officer may ease gang tension
08/05/72   11  Arsonist or gang sought
09/18/72   23  Policemen injured by street rowdies
10/06/72  1-2  (Hrushowy, Pat) 'Big brother' may keep tabs on
                  delinquents
11/20/72    9  Youth gang attack cars
02/17/73 1,27  (Hendrickson, Bob) The Chinatown patrol
04/16/73    2  Beggar gangs bug pedestrians
06/12/73   21  Knife, street begging curbs sought by police
                  commission
11/19/73   27  (Hendrickson, Bob) Teens bored-youth workers
02/13/74    8  (Simons, Ed) Chinatown 'gang boss' jailed 9
                  months
03/25/74    7  Four wounded at party
07/27/74   64  Age breaking up that old gang
08/26/74   25  Car dragged me-hurt youth
10/03/74    1  Youth set alight
10/04/74   23  Human torch-lighter hunted
01/23/75   23  No instant solution to hooliganism-Levi
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04/03/75	25	(Southam, Harvey) Juvenile hoods 'need removal'
06/12/75	39	(Fairly, Jim) Flatiron sent gang fleeing, court told
07/07/75	7	Cyclist charged in fight
10/18/75	8	Juvenile break-in gang had professional touch
11/02/77	25	(Arnason, Al) 'Police seem helpless to control punks'
02/04/78	4	(Bell, Dennis) Chinatown helps police put lid on youth gangs
02/06/78	10	(Arnett, Peter) For lawmen in North America it's the year of the dragon
08/29/80	A5	'Crime up amongst Chinese'
11/12/81	A4	Youth stabbed when 'macho' gangs clash
12/02/83	4	(Jiwa, Salim) Police aim to cage Red Eagles
05/24/84	1,3	(Berry, Steve) Chinatown violence
04/29/84	3	(Edge, Marc) Stiff terms in West side attack
06/21/84	1,9	(Berry, Steve) Chinatown gang terror
11/14/84	1,3	(Morgan, Keith) Gang bust
12/17/84	3	Gang violence erupts again
01/15/85	6	Cops fight terror ring
03/03/85	5	Punks paradise
03/07/85	3	Teen plays Godfather
03/10/85	7	'Good friend' dies in brawl
03/12/85	4	A culture clash seen as cause
03/12/85	12	Guns won't solve gang problem
03/13/85	4	Mayor pledges blitz in Chinatown
03/17/85	3	Gang kills man, 71
03/17/85	25	'He died aiding my son'
03/19/85	10	Jury 'ganged up' claims husband
03/20/85	4	Victims extract justice
03/28/85	5	Police target gangs
04/23/85	5	Victim recalls terror attack
04/25/85	13	'Beating led to attack'
05/01/86	9	Guilty, says jury
10/27/85	20	Bikers face hassle
12/20/85	5	Gangs spread terror

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