

Graffiti and Gang Basic Training

Definitions:

- What is graffiti?
 - “A drawing or inscription made on a wall or other surface.”
 - American Heritage College Dictionary 3rd Edition 1997
- When is graffiti illegal?
 - Defacement – “...including but not limited to painting, drawing, writing, or otherwise marring, the surface of property by use of paint, spray paint, ink, or any other substance or object...”
 - Colorado Peace Officer’s Handbook 2004/2005 Revised Edition
- What is a gang?
 - “a group of criminals or juvenile delinquents”
 - Webster’s New Dictionary and Thesaurus 2002
 - “...a group of three or more individuals with a common interest, bond or activity, characterized by criminal or delinquent conduct, engaged in either collectively or individually.”
 - Colorado Revised Statutes Pertaining to Criminal Law 2009

Graffiti and Gang Basic Training

Graffiti can be classified into five different categories:

1) General Graffiti

a. "Carving in the tree."

- i. Typically easy to read
- ii. Has a specific meaning
- iii. Is usually a single or one time event

Example:



2) Hate or Political Graffiti

a. Racial hate or politically charged message

- i. Typically easy to read
- ii. May include racial slurs or language

Example:



3) Graffiti Writers Graffiti

a. "Real artists"

- i. Typically do not have violent messages
- ii. Writers believe in and follow the writer's code
- iii. Pieces utilize multiple colors and styles
- iv. Most of the better writers are older (20's - 30's) and have generally achieved a high level of status within the graffiti community
- v. Some pieces may be created legally
- vi. Very few, if any true graffiti crew left

Example:



4) Tag-Bangers

a. Hybrid Gangs

- i. Small groups, gangs and/or crews that combine to create one gang or crew
- ii. Individuals typically have “gangster” mentality
- iii. Graffiti often combines the flamboyant nature of the graffiti writers’ with numbers and symbols showing gang affiliation or allegiance
- iv. Members may also be directly affiliated with a gang
- v. Members do not claim gang affiliation, but rather their tagging crew affiliation to avoid being identified as a gang member

Example:



b. Some Tag-banging crews in the Metro area:

- i. RGK – Real Ghetto Kids, Real Gang Kids
- ii. TKO – Total Knight Owls, True Kings Only
- iii. CTA – Crime Through Art
- iv. TKO – True Kings Only, Total Knight Owls
- v. EOS – Envy Our Style
- vi. THC – The Habitual Criminals
- vii. K(C)BS – Kant Be Stopped, Kings Bombin States
- viii. KNO- Knockin Niggaz Out
- ix. DIE – Death In Effect
- x. RTD – Rebels Til Death

5) Gang graffiti

- a. Groups that form “sets” that identify and align with the larger gang. (Ex; Rollin 60’s Crip set)
 - i. Most gangs have an organizational structure
 1. Few gangs refuse to organize such as the Fresno Bulldogs and certain Crip sets
 - ii. Gang graffiti will ALWAYS follow the colors, symbols, numbers and activity of the gang

Example:



- b. Some gangs in the Metro Area:
 - i. GKI – Gallant Knights Insane
 1. Purple, Black, Colorado Rockies
 2. West Side neighborhood affiliation, 7-11-19
 - ii. NSM – North Side mafia
 1. Red, black/white, Nebraska Huskers, 14
 - iii. Crips
 1. Blue, some sets may use purple
 2. refer to each other as Cuz or Loc
 3. Numbers and symbols depend on set affiliation
 - iv. Bloods
 1. Red, some sets may use green
 2. refer to each other as Dawg, Damu, or Piru
 3. Numbers and symbols depend on set affiliation

- v. Norteno – Norte 14
 1. Red, Nebraska Corn Huskers, 14
 2. Pay “taxes” to Nuestra Familia (NF) prison gang
 3. Members may have additional street gang affiliation
- vi. Sureno – Sur 13
 1. Blue, LA Dodgers, 13
 2. Pay “taxes” to Mexican Mafia (La Eme) prison gang
 3. members may have additional street gang affiliation
- vii. Juggalos
 1. Red, yellow, orange
 2. Hatchet man, Psychopathic Records, Jokers Cards
- viii. MS 13 – Mara Salvatrucha
 1. Black, satanic symbolism
 2. 13 – originally only used number 13 because most other Hispanic gangs in southern California did. Some evidence shows they may now be associated with La Eme

Example of GKI, NSM, Crip, Blood, Norteno, and Sureno graffiti:



Definitions:

NS – North Side

SS – South Side

WS – West Side

ES – East Side

SK – South Side Killer

NK – North Side Killer

CK – Crip Kiler

BK – Blood Killer

14 – affiliation with Norteno / Nuestra Familia prison gang

13 – affiliation with Sureno / La Eme (Mexican mafia) prison gang

Click (clique) – affiliated subset of bigger gang

Crips will typically eliminate all B's in their "language"

Bloods will replace C's with K's in their "language"

Writer – person who creates graffiti

Crew – group of graffiti writers

Crew is commonly spelled with a K.

Toy – bad or sloppy graffiti writer

King – top status graffiti writer can achieve

"original" monikers may have the number 1 (either written or numerical)
after their moniker – Kode1, KodeOner

Bomb – write graffiti

Piece – "master piece" – term used for more elaborate, multicolored works
of graffiti

Throw up – quick one color "tag". Can also be one color "basic" bubble
letters

Graffiti writers may add an e, er or an s on the end of their moniker to make
it appear to be different. Egs; Kode, Koder, Kodes. or Dim, Dimer, Dime,
Dimes